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THE NATION. VOL. XXXVIII., No. 1.]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1925.

[THE ATHENÆUM. NO. 4979.

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All communications and MSS. should be addressed to the Editor, THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, W.C.1.

EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE Pact Conference is to open at Locarno on Monday next. The date and place of this meeting were definitely announced on Wednesday, but the personnel and agenda remain in doubt at the time of going to press. Great Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium will, of course, be represented. The choice of Locarno is said to have been made for the convenience of Italy, so she, too, will presumably participate, though it is now thought unlikely that Mussolini will attend in person. Poland and Czechoslovakia are also certain to be represented in Locarno, but whether M. Skrzynski and M. Benes will be admitted to all the meetings of the conference, or only called in when their interests are thought to be involved, is doubtful. As to the agenda, the German Government has solemnly declared, in accepting the invitation, that the questions of war guilt and the evacuation of Cologne cannot be excluded. To this Mr. Chamberlain has as solemnly replied that the negotiation of a Security Pact cannot modify the Treaty of Versailles or alter our judgment of the past, and that the evacuation of Cologne depends on German disarmament. These, however, are merely the trimmings which public opinion in the various countries is supposed to demand. The vital question about the agenda is whether it will be confined to the western frontier of Germany or whether M. Briand, ginned up by his eastern allies, will insist upon the Polish frontier being simultaneously discussed.

E. H. T. [Signature]

The prospects of any tangible result being obtained from the Conference probably depend very largely upon the limitation of the field. The proposed Rhineland Pact, with its arbitration treaties, raises at least enough thorny problems for one conference, without the complications of the Polish question. The published correspondence between France and Germany did not indeed inspire much hope that a satisfactory Western Pact could be concluded. From this it appeared that Germany contemplated arbitration treaties on the model of her existing treaty with Switzerland, by which justiciable questions are to be settled by arbitration, while non-justiciable (or, as they are sometimes loosely termed, "political") questions are left to be dealt with by conciliation. France, on the other hand, desired com-

prehensive arbitration treaties on the lines of the Protocol. Moreover, the French Notes seemed to imply that the "right" to invade Germany in the event of default under the Treaty of Versailles would not be removed by the conclusion of a Pact, and this, of course, would destroy any value which the Pact might have in German eyes. How far these difficulties were faced and overcome by the jurists who conferred in London recently is not definitely known, but it is rumoured that considerable concessions have been made to the German point of view. The fact that the discussions have developed to a stage in which a conference can take place is in itself a notable achievement, but we confess that we should be more hopeful if M. Skrzynski and M. Benes remained in their own countries.

Last week a new "Organization for the Maintenance of Supplies"—"O.M.S."—appeared before the public. Its President is Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, an ex-Viceroy of India and a former Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Lord Jellicoe, Lord Falkland, Sir James Rennell Rodd, and General Sir Francis Lloyd are among the members of its Council. The object of this organization is "to register and classify those citizens of all classes and either sex who are prepared to render voluntary assistance in maintaining the supply of food, water, and fuel, and the efficiency of public services indispensable to the normal life of the community," in the event of a general strike. The whole enterprise is described as "unofficial," but if it were not undertaken at the request of the Government it would only be mischievous, and it is hardly conceivable that these eminent men, recently retired from the public services, would embark upon it unprompted. It was obvious, therefore, that O.M.S. was officially inspired, but why, then, does the Government prefer this indirect method of approach? Any steps that are thought to be essential should be taken by the Departments themselves, not delegated to an unofficial body, which, however unprovocative it may wish to be, can only work through dangerous propaganda.

In point of fact there is an official organization already in existence for maintaining the vital services of

the nation in the event of a general strike. Recent Governments have made a practice of appointing a Civil Commissioner for this purpose; the present occupant of that post is Sir William Mitchell-Thomson, the Postmaster-General; and it is stated in the Press that he has recently taken steps to perfect the necessary machinery. What, then, is the need for O.M.S.? It is said that Sir William has arranged for the material, but that O.M.S. will supply the personnel. But here again there is duplication, for Sir Francis Lloyd, in a letter to the *Times* of Wednesday, says frankly that "it will come to precisely the same thing whether a citizen prefers to enrol himself at once in the official Special Constabulary Reserve or to register with his local Committee of the O.M.S., and so pass on." It was clearly desirable that Sir William Mitchell-Thomson, or some other responsible Minister, should state the Government's attitude towards O.M.S. and the work that it is undertaking. It is not merely a question of duplicating harmless machinery; there is real danger in activities of this kind. To take administrative precautions against a possible national stoppage is one thing; to set retired generals, admirals, and Civil Servants to work recruiting an army for a class-war is another and a far more dangerous thing.

* * * * *
Sir William Joynson-Hicks, after a week's delay, has made the inevitable admission, in "a letter to a correspondent," that O.M.S. has been started with the Government's connivance, if not on its initiative. "I will be perfectly frank with you," wrote the Home Secretary; an ominous beginning!

"I told the promoters of the O.M.S. that there was no objection on the part of the Government to their desire to inaugurate the body to which you refer; that, if and when an emergency arose, the Government would discharge the responsibility which is theirs, and theirs alone, but that it would be a very great assistance to us to receive from the O.M.S. . . . classified lists of men in different parts of the country who would be willing to place their services at the disposal of the Government."

The Government have not, according to Sir William, "desired to assume what might be considered a provocative attitude by enrolling several hundred thousand men," but this is precisely what they have incited O.M.S. to do, and it is far more objectionable when done in that way.

* * * * *
It is not surprising that the hasty arrangements by which the coal strike was averted in July should have given rise to questions of interpretation. At the time everyone, or at least the Government, supposed that the payment of wages on the basis of the 1924 agreement, and the maintenance of wages at their present level, meant exactly the same thing; and the Government accordingly employed now the one formula (as in the White Paper defining the terms of the subsidy) and now the other (as in the Supplementary Estimate by which Parliament voted the subsidy). But they do not mean the same thing. It is possible for individual collieries to reduce wages, consistently with the 1924 agreement, by varying the "basis rates"; and a few collieries have actually done this. It is entirely natural that the miners should protest; but they will be very ill-advised, in our judgment, if they decide to push their protests to the point of serious trouble at the delegate conference which is to be held next week-end. If anything like a general movement to reduce basis rates were to take place, it would be another matter, for such a movement would make nonsense, as Mr. Baldwin has recognized, of the whole wage agreement. But the mine-owners have made it perfectly clear that they have no such foolish and

dishonourable intention. The reductions of basis rates recently proposed are in full accord with ordinary practice; they are confined to a few collieries, in peculiar difficulties despite the subsidy, who contemplate shutting down altogether, and suggest wage reductions as an alternative.

* * * *

The point with which the miners are really concerned is that if the men decline this alternative, they should not be debarred from unemployment benefit if the colliery shuts down. This, replies Mr. Baldwin, is a point to be settled not by him but by the arbitral machinery laid down in the Unemployment Insurance Acts. His competence in the matter ends with the assertion of his view that the settlement of July merely continues the wage agreement of 1924. As regards the claim for unemployment benefit, the miners may, for all we know, have, as they say, a valid legal case. If so, by all means let them test it in the courts. If their case fails, they may still have a grievance, for in view of the ambiguity of the 1924 settlement, there seems about as much to be said for them as against them. But it is an absurdly small grievance for serious trouble; and the public will certainly think it a grievance which the miners might well swallow in consideration of the heavy subsidy they are receiving from the community. The miners will be very foolish if they give the appearance of making trouble unnecessarily; and we have little doubt that the delegate conference will avoid extreme courses.

* * * *

The Food Council over which Lord Bradbury presides has justified its existence by hastening the reduction of the price of bread from 10d. to 9½d. a 4-lb. loaf, and it is now agitating vigorously for a further reduction. The tendency of retailers to delay the passing-on of a fall in wholesale prices to the consumer is undoubtedly increased by the existence of strong retailers' organizations, and it is here that public opinion, focussed by a body like the Food Council, can be effectively used. The practice of giving short weight, which is alleged to be widespread among grocers and other shopkeepers, is next to receive attention. This may be an urgent problem, but it would be interesting to learn when the Food Council is going to investigate the marketing of fish and vegetables. The Royal Commission on Food Prices was originally instructed to take these commodities within the scope of its inquiry; but, after producing an interim report on meat and wheat, the Commission broke up, leaving the Food Council, which it had created, to carry on its work. It will be unfortunate if this results in the neglect of the fish problem, which really needs to be investigated. The discrepancies between the prices received by the producer (the fisherman) and those paid by the consumer are more marked in the fish trade than in any other; the inshore fisherman is an easy prey for the exploiting middleman, and the consumer is equally at the mercy of the Billingsgate ring. The whole organization of fish distribution needs overhauling.

* * * *

Just as last week's issue went to press news came through that the Spaniards had made a desperate effort to recover from their first check at Alhucemas. After opening up new communications from inside Alhucemas, they have stormed two positions immediately in front of them, and are at last in a position to advance on Ajdir. The army can thus be supplied from inside or outside the bay, and there is no longer any fear that it will be isolated for days at a time when a nor'-wester makes it impossible to get through the surf

at Cebadilla. The Marques de Estella's last utterance proves that the Spanish troops have orders to attack Ajdir. It is quite impossible to estimate their chances of success. Between their present position and Ajdir the Rifis have concentrated in a strong defensive position; and the jumping-off point of the Spanish troops, though much improved, is not a very good one. Still, the French are likely to press Abd-el-Krim very hard; and, in war, success is not always gained at the first coming on. Marshal Lyautey's resignation has no effect on the position: it is a matter of common knowledge that Marshal Pétain has been in effective control for months past.

* * *

None the less, when the campaign is over, when the moment for resettling the disturbed tribes and negotiating with Abd-el-Krim arrives, the French Government are likely to miss the old Marshal. He is one of the best examples of the cultured, widely read, military man who can deal with great responsibilities with the vigour of a soldier and the freedom of a philosopher. Even though the conduct of military operations had to be confided to another, it was an advantage to the French Government to have a man so universally respected as the titular head of affairs. The death of M. Léon Bourgeois deprives the French nation of another very able servant. This is not the place to discuss the ex-Minister's attitude towards the problems of international arbitration, or to describe his influence upon the League of Nations Committee at the Versailles Conference. It must suffice to say that, though perhaps he did not sufficiently detach himself from the politics of the Clemenceau Government, he brought into counsel an exceptionally honest, well-informed mind. His view was that the League of Nations could be constituted either as a super-State with armed force, or as a clearing-house for acute diplomatic discussion. He thought that, as constituted, it was too much of a mixture between the two; but he never wavered in his loyalty to its governing principles.

* * *

Signor Mussolini's last utterance at Vercelli was certainly composed in the grand Fascist manner:—

"If the declining faiths may permit themselves the luxury of being tolerant, the rising faith must necessarily be intolerant and intransigent. For the opponents of Fascism there will be, if necessary, the cudgel and the cold steel."

This rodomontade is, however, an explanatory preamble to impending legislation. Signor Farinacci, who has always been the *enfant terrible* of the party, stated, some days before Signor Mussolini spoke, that the Fascist revolution would shortly enter into its third and last period. The Government had up to now been clearing away the débris of ruined institutions: it would soon start upon the constructive work of building the Fascist State. If existing rumours are correct, the first batch of these new laws will apparently affect local governments and labour. Elected mayors are to be replaced by "podestá," appointed by the Fascist Government; and trade union regulations are to be either limited or modified by law. This will be the first Fascist attempt to interfere seriously with organized labour: it will be an interesting experiment to watch.

* * *

The success of the Indian Opposition in the Legislative Assembly at Simla, with their resolution demanding an immediate further step towards autonomy, raised a question as to the next move by the Swarajist leaders. It has come in the form of an endeavour to get the Swarajist and Independent members of the

Assembly to resign their seats so as to have a large number of by-elections on the issue of "Constitutional revision at once, or in 1929." Pundit Motilal Nehru, the Swarajist leader in the Assembly, obtained the consent of all the members of his own party, but the response from the Independents has been indecisive. It is to be presumed that Pundit Motilal will not advise the Swarajists to go out unless they can count upon the full support of the Independents; but in any case, the practical value of the move is not very clear. The country knows that on the Indian side there is a virtually unanimous demand for autonomy in the provinces and in the Central Government. The only result of the elections, therefore, would be a return of the sitting members, with no change in their relation to the Government. Meanwhile, the Labour Party Conference has passed the customary annual resolution in favour of Indian self-government and full dominion status. It was moved by Mr. George Lansbury, without reference to the Labour Government's policy in 1924.

* * *

A diplomatic correspondent writes: "Seldom had representatives of countries, by no means friendly to each other, such an easy time as M. Tchitcherin and M. Skrzynski had at their Warsaw conference. Neither could have seriously sought or hoped to gain the friendship or co-operation of the other. The contrast between the two countries is too sharp, from whatever angle one envisages it; it would have been no good discussing differences. Poland is in possession of vast stretches of White Russian and Little Russian territory, which Minsk and Kiev never will, and Moscow therefore never can, honestly renounce. Russian nationalists resent it as foreign dominion over ethnically Russian land; from the social point of view it means the dominion of Polish landlords over Russian peasants (such as the Poles themselves mean no longer to tolerate over Polish peasants in ethnically Polish land); from either point of view it is objectionable and, in the long run, intolerable. But M. Tchitcherin and M. Skrzynski could cordially shake hands and smile at each other. They engaged in a perfectly harmless flirtation, which must have been particularly pleasant in its secure innocence. They can, indeed, sympathize with each other, for they are faced by the same danger—of losing the friends on whom they have relied hitherto. Why should they not help each other? M. Skrzynski wants to put the screw on France; M. Tchitcherin on Germany; so they just smile at each other, hoping that Europe will take note of the fact."

* * *

The further reduction of Bank rate to 4 per cent. shows how far the Bank of England is departing from the ordinary rules in its handling of the Gold Standard. A reduction of Bank rate at a time when the exchange is actually below gold export point, and when moreover the embargo on foreign issues is still maintained, ought to horrify our orthodox City Editors, who have lately been pointing out the need for deflation in order to relieve the export trades. It would be ridiculous to reduce the rate this week, and to raise it again next week or the week after; and we can only assume that the Bank is determined to maintain the exchange by the free use of its credits in New York. This certainly is not the prescription of the Currency Committee. Is it not time that we had a clear statement as to what our official monetary policy really is?

* * *

** Next week's issue of THE NATION will include a special Supplement of Publishers' Autumn Announcements.

BRITAIN AND THE LEAGUE

WHITHER are we drifting in our relations with the League? Two disquieting facts have recently become apparent. On the one hand Britain is in bad odour with that vague but real entity called "League opinion"; on the other, British opinion is becoming equally unfriendly to the League. Starting from the most diverse standpoints on the merits of the issue, the British Press has reached a remarkable degree of unanimity in denouncing the Council's handling of the Mosul dispute, and for the most part it has done so with a gusto which it is difficult to reconcile with a strong attachment to the League. Some journals have improved the occasion by publishing sweeping attacks from surprising contributors on the trend of League activity. When a journalist of Mr. Sisley Huddleston's antecedents can write under the heading "Is the League of Nations a Menace?" and can sum up in the affirmative, when at the same time it has become fashionable at Geneva to say that Britain stands to-day where France stood under M. Poincaré, it is evident that we have a situation which calls for the serious attention of everyone who believes that the hopes of a better international order are bound up with the fortunes of the League, and the true prestige of Britain with the part she plays in strengthening it.

Let us take stock of this situation. To what, in the first place, is our unpopularity at Geneva due? The British delegation at last month's Assembly took up a prevailingly negative and critical attitude. We were in the position of "crabbing" or appearing to "crab" almost everything that was proposed. On some of the issues raised, the British attitude was, in our judgment, entirely reasonable. On the crucial issue of the Protocol, for example, the British standpoint is necessarily very different from that of other States. To France, and to most countries represented at Geneva, the Protocol is essentially a guarantee; to Britain it is essentially an obligation. No stones can therefore fairly be cast at us for our special reluctance to adhere to this project. But even the issues wrapped up with the Protocol were handled by the Government in a manner which displayed a curious insensitiveness to the trend of League opinion. The very fact that the "sanctions" obligations of the Protocol were too much for us to swallow made it important to emphasize that we were not behind other countries in readiness to bow to international authority in the settlement of our own quarrels; and we had an obvious opportunity of demonstrating this by signing, as so many other States have done, the well-known "Optional Clause" which would bind us to accept the ruling of the Hague Court on disputes of a justiciable nature. There are good reasons for hesitating about trying to extend the method of arbitration to disputes of other kinds; but none of these reasons apply to justiciable disputes, disputes as to the interpretation of treaties and the like, which have always been recognized as the proper domain of arbitration. The British Government has, indeed, had one good reason for reluctance to commit itself in this respect; the rules of war at sea form a highly controversial subject, on which we have always taken a different view from that widely held abroad, and, in the event of war, it might be vital to us to maintain our own standpoint. But this objection could be completely met by a reservation excluding the laws of war from the matters on which we recognized

the jurisdiction of the International Court. Last year the ground was explored, and it was ascertained that such a reservation would arouse no objection from other members of the League, and the adherence of Britain on these terms to the Optional Clause was foreshadowed. This year, however, the British Government has receded; and Mr. Chamberlain has invoked the traditional exception in old arbitration treaties of disputes affecting "honour and vital interests"—a muddled criterion, which it might have been hoped the clear definition of justiciable disputes in the Statute of the International Court would have rendered finally obsolete—as a reason for our refusing to commit ourselves at all.

Now we do not believe that there are any bad motives behind the Government's refusal to sign the Optional Clause, or indeed that it feels at all strongly on the matter. Britain, as Mr. Chamberlain justly observed, has a good record on arbitration in the past, and when it comes to the point of a concrete dispute, we are likely to be as ready to arbitrate as anyone else. Why then do we refuse to sign? Partly, no doubt, because of Dominion apprehensions on the immigration question; and, for the rest, general caution. You can never be quite sure how any commitment will work out in practice; better not then commit yourself unless there is some advantage in doing so. This is probably all that there is in the minds of our Ministers. But what is significant and deplorable is that they should see no advantage in undertaking this particular commitment. Our own adhesion to the Optional Clause would probably serve to bring into line the other laggard members of the League; it would thus contribute very materially to an important international advance, and it would at the same time help to dispel the unfavourable impression naturally created by our rejecting the Protocol after sponsoring it last year. But these considerations apparently leave Mr. Chamberlain cold. Compare his attitude over this question with his attitude over the project of a Pact. Mr. Chamberlain is alive to the fact that our rejection of the Protocol exposes us to reproach in France as being indifferent to her security, and he is sensitive to this reproach. He therefore throws himself eagerly into the work of bringing the Pact to birth, and in this cause he is prepared to overcome mountains of difficulty—the traditional British distrust of Continental obligations and Dominion complications too. The objective of a real Franco-German *rapprochement* is certainly a more considerable one than that represented by the Optional Clause; but this does not suffice to explain the contrast. The truth appears to be that to Mr. Chamberlain and his colleagues France is a living entity, with needs and susceptibilities of which they must take account; while the League is still to them a dead thing, a piece of machinery merely, to which indeed they feel no ill-will, but which they do not conceive as possessing personality, a point of view, cornea upon which it is possible to tread.

This is a serious mistake. Life has long since been breathed into the League. It is to-day much more than a mere assemblage of delegates of different Governments. It is an institution which is rapidly evolving its own traditions, its own atmosphere, its own individuality. From amidst the diverse standpoints and fluctuating moods of the various delegations, the mysterious entity, League opinion, emerges as a solid fact. It is not always a perfectly reasonable opinion. There is a touch in it of the spirit of a propagandist society, prone to go further than is really wise or practicable, unduly resent-

ful of discouraging criticism. We are far, therefore, from suggesting that the British Government should seek to cultivate a cheap popularity at Geneva by endorsing what it believes to be foolish projects. By all means let it state on every issue with complete candour its considered point of view. Only let it be a considered point of view. What we urge is that the Government should show itself sensitive to League opinion, recognize it for the force it is, and above all that it should study and take a sympathetic interest in the constructive work which the League is accomplishing in so many useful and unobtrusive spheres. It ought to be a recognized and important part of the business of every British Government to prepare for the Assemblies in September, and to send there delegations equipped for their task with a considered policy, not with a mere jumble of the detailed objections which the departments in Whitehall naturally pass upon proposals submitted to them for criticism.

If the British Government will wake up to the fact that the League is alive, and shape its policy accordingly, the bad impression we have created at Geneva will very quickly disappear, for it is not at all deeply rooted. The League opinion, of which we have spoken, is in the main a disinterested opinion. It is something very different from the opinion of this or that country, or group of countries, even though particular countries may exercise great influence there. And it is a force of immense potential value. Nothing illustrates better, in our judgment, the difference that the creation of the League has made in international affairs than the Mosul dispute. In pre-war days, in a territorial dispute between Britain and Turkey, we should have received a very small measure of justice from the public opinion of the world. We should have been generally regarded as a big and greedy Power bullying a weaker one; our motives would have been suspected; the merits of the case would have received no dispassionate consideration. The intervention of the League alters the whole atmosphere. The Report of the League's Commission has set out the merits of the case in a manner which carries more conviction, we suspect, even to British opinion than would have been achieved by an *ex parte* statement of our case, and immeasurably more to opinion in other countries. As a result, there was manifest at Geneva last week, notwithstanding all our momentary unpopularity, a remarkable measure of support for the British claim. It is only a very superficial critic who will treat this as being of no account, because the actual settlement of the dispute has been postponed, properly as we think, until the ambiguities of the Treaty of Lausanne have been resolved. On the contrary, it is a very important fact, which may one day have great practical consequences, that through the agency of the League even Great Powers, whose position is in truth as full of perils as that of smaller States, can get justice done them in the judgment of the world.

The current disposition in Britain to speak slightly of the League is, therefore, profoundly foolish. In sober truth, the League is to-day both a stronger body, and a more impartial body, than it seemed at all reasonable to expect when it was set up six years ago. Lord Grey's "Twenty-Five Years" comes appropriately to remind us of the virtual impossibility of preserving peace—for that is the real moral of the story—under the old anarchy, which the League is intended to replace. Let us abstain from absurd resentments, and see to it that British policy is shaped as much towards cultivating good relations with the League as with any particular Power in Europe or outside it.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AUSTRIA

THE League of Nations programme for Austria's reconstruction, as drawn up in the autumn of 1922, dealt with public finance alone and provided for balancing Austria's State Budgets, without inquiring into the basic problem whether the budget of the nation itself could possibly be balanced. The fatal effects of fiscal mismanagement were to be removed, but the question was not asked whether, even so, Austria's body economic was fit to live, or whether the mismanagement itself was not just an acute symptom of a deep-seated disease. The surgical operation undertaken by the League has proved a brilliant success, except that the patient does not feel much better for it; but the best surgeons never operate without a previous general examination of the patient, to supply guidance required even for an obviously necessary operation. At last, in June of this year, the League of Nations decided that "a non-political inquiry into the present economic conditions in Austria should be made as soon as possible . . . in order to ascertain the influence which these conditions may have upon the work of financial reconstruction undertaken under the auspices of the League." The quaint wording of the resolution, which seems to treat the patient as subsidiary to the operation, may be disregarded, for so it was by the two eminent economists, Mr. Layton and M. Rist, whom the Council invited to carry out the inquiry; but the limitation contained in the word "non-political" deserves attention. The present Austria declared herself in November, 1918, part of a united Germany, a declaration unanimously confirmed by her Constituent Assembly elected in February, 1919; but although self-determination and the reunion of sub-divided nations were proclaimed the basis of Europe's territorial rearrangement, Austria was ordered to enter upon a separate existence, which she herself considered morally undesirable and economically impossible, and the isolation imposed on her was "guaranteed" by the League of Nations under the derisive name of "independence." Austria's economic position would obviously be very different in a union with Germany, and, rightly or wrongly, public opinion in Austria ascribes her present economic distress to that enforced "independence." But by the word "non-political" Messrs. Layton and Rist were clearly warned not to inquire into the "mysteries" of statecraft, but to treat Austria's present international position as unchangeable, God-given, not man-made.

Within these limitations, the report* is what one would have expected from its authors, a piece of the best, most thorough and intelligent economic scholarship; in the short compass of one hundred and fifty pages one gets at last a conscientious and reliable summary of Austria's present economic situation. In its judgments and forecasts it is naturally restrained; they are expressed, or rather suggested, in unfinished statements, of which the meaning is nevertheless fairly clear. The report has been described as "optimistic"; certainly the authors tried to encourage and not to depress, but the conclusions one reaches on a careful reading can hardly be called cheerful. They may be summed up as follows:—

From the war, the disruption of the Habsburg Monarchy, and the post-war chaos, Austria emerged

* Report presented to the Council of the League of Nations by W. T. Layton, C.H., and Charles Rist. (Constable.)

severely impoverished, with a loss of a considerable part of her (now foreign) investments; with her own working capital exhausted; with her agricultural production seriously impaired, and her industry much reduced through the loss of its old markets. The condition and output of both show marked improvement in the last two years; still, neither has as yet reached its pre-war level, and Austria now suffers from "an exceptional degree of unemployment, which bears perhaps a higher ratio to the industrial population than in any other country in Europe." None the less, the expenditure of the nation (not the State) exceeds its revenue, and, on a conservative estimate, the yearly deficit amounts to between thirty and fifty million dollars. It cannot be covered indefinitely by foreign loans and by the sale of assets, as it is at present. Still, to raise agricultural production, cheap, long-term loans are required, which so far have not been forthcoming; whilst industry requires "ample and reasonably secure foreign markets," but whether it can obtain them largely depends on the policy of other States; so far these have raised ever higher tariff barriers to create new industries "with the sole object of replacing undertakings which already exist in neighbouring countries." The evils from which Austria suffers are not peculiar to her alone; but "so far at all events as Austria is concerned, it is essential that a remedy should be found in the near future." "We have not been asked to formulate concrete proposals . . ."; indeed not.

To amplify some of the most important points: not far from half of Austria's population is engaged in agriculture and forestry, but the annual revenue derived from them is not more than one-fourth to one-third of the national income. There is room for improvement; but, one might add, improvement in agriculture is always slow, especially with small peasant proprietors, who in Austria suffer least from her present economic position. Of industry as a whole the report puts the production at something between 75 and 80 per cent. pre-war, which seems a rather high estimate, as home consumption of manufactured goods must have decreased considerably, whilst Austria's exports "cannot be much above 60 per cent. of the pre-war level," the exports to the Succession States having "undoubtedly fallen to less than 50 per cent.," to other countries to about 80 per cent. British exports in 1924 are still estimated at 80 per cent. pre-war; no wonder then that Austria, at the end of February, had 16 per cent. unemployed among its industrial labour (a figure which, owing to seasonal variations, decreased in summer). Besides, there is a great deal of "part-time work," which the report does not mention. The efficiency and output of Austrian labour has improved to a marked extent during the last two years, and so have wages. Unskilled labour has reached, or even exceeded, the pre-war level of real wages; skilled labour as a whole has only just reached the nominal pre-war level; the "black-coated" workers are miserably underpaid. As to business profits, in the absence of reliable balance sheets it is impossible to pronounce an opinion, but it is generally agreed that margins are "being cut very fine and prices brought down to net cost of production." One could wish the report went deeper into this problem of Austrian business finance. The going down to "net cost of production" sounds ominous when one remembers that even now every branch of production and trade in Austria still receives a virtual subsidy from the "rent control," which practically amounts to a confiscation of house property and results in an all-round cheapening of commodities and services. In other words, the present

competing power of Austrian industry still presupposes the uncompensated consumption of one form of national wealth. As to indebtedness, Austrian industry and agriculture have profited by the wholesale wiping-out of debts under inflation, but now that the circulating capital of Austria has been well-nigh extinguished, they have to pay very high rates of interest ("on overdrafts of the very highest class, still 15½ per cent."): and these credits are provided by the banks largely from foreign loans.

In seven weeks Messrs. Layton and Rist have done their work with a thoroughness which leaves no important fact or factor unmentioned. Still, although the picture is complete, the criticism might perhaps be ventured that its proportions are not altogether correct. Attention centres on production, which can be discussed in concrete terms and illustrated by statistical tables (but which was naturally least bound up with Vienna's position as a capital): to this lure of the concrete and ascertainable the authors seem to have succumbed. But whilst a picture based almost entirely on production might suffice, e.g., for Manchester, it would not for London, and does not for Vienna, where before the war a very high proportion of the population was engaged in commerce, finance, administration, literature, &c., or lived on income from capital. The story of these now submerged upper and middle classes, of the intelligentsia and half-intelligentsia, is allowed very little space in the report; they have hardly any trade unions to study and plead their case, few statistics about them are available, one would have to speak of them *en littérateur* rather than *en économiste*, the place of concrete facts would be taken by the *lacrymæ rerum*. Still, one obtains some glimpses of what has happened to them, especially where they enter within the purview of labour organizations. One reads of 10,000 bank clerks discharged in 1924, more thousands dismissed this year, and still more to follow; one learns that of 78,000 "axed" officials only about 25,000 "have successfully entered the labour market"; one finds that in commerce unemployment figures are very high, and likely to get still worse; that in November, 1924, commercial employees received £4½ a month; and barristers' clerks with five years' service had only £3½! The cost of living, except for rent, is almost as high in Vienna as in London; one may therefore try to imagine an existence on £3½ a month, but to understand it one has to see it at least once in actual life. But what about their "principals"? The degree of under-employment among the crowds of small shopkeepers, merchants, and agents, of professional men, &c., is only just touched upon in the report; no picture is given of the intense anxiety and distress which now dominate their lives. But there is one dry sentence, eloquent to those who know the conditions: "A large proportion of the middle classes has been subjected to a long strain of poverty, and in many cases only lives by means of rent restriction and by sub-letting parts of their flats." In other words, these *nouveaux pauvres* still live by the one piece of expropriation which happens to work in their favour, and many more by selling their last assets, which often means their furniture. Watching Vienna, one sees that there are many forms of so-called Bolshevism, so different in methods and in avowed principles, and yet so similar in results. Here one of the finest cultures in Europe is dying a slow death in a country whose "independence" is "guaranteed" by the League of Nations. One is glad to think that Great Britain bears no direct responsibility for that "independence."

L. B. NAMIER.

ENGLAND'S GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND

POSTSCRIPT

IT may be said, with some asperity, perhaps, that the picture I have drawn is not true of other parts of rural England.

The denial is much too sweeping. It is true of other parts of England. But it is not true of rural England in general.

There are to be found in rural England, we all know:

Many able and public-spirited farmers,
Many intelligent and zealous clergymen,
Many self-respecting and well-housed labourers, and
Many villages which are full of life.

One would think that the fact hardly needed stating. If they were not to be found there would be no rural England.

The situation was fairly illustrated in a recent issue of the *Times*. On one page somebody said, what is true, that we have in England "some of the best farmers in the world." On another page the late Minister of Agriculture was reported as speaking, as accurately, of "the dangerous extent of negligent farming." The difficulty of generalizing which applies to farming applies equally to the rest of the rural community.

But it is a duty to say some things quite plainly:—

1. I have sometimes been as dumfounded as depressed by finding enlightened country residents prone to take an easier view of the condition of the forlorn parts of rural England than the dreary facts warrant.

2. It is quite possible to live in a community, and have a forward view and public spirit, and not have a realizing sense of what has happened and of what is happening in that community.

3. It is not everyone who has an economic sense.

4. It is not every man and woman for whom human life is the chief interest.

5. It is not everyone who, to a knowledge of the facts, adds enough imagination to interpret and vivify those facts.

6. It is not everybody who can see through, who keenly wishes to see through, the pleasing haze of the traditional, the ordered and the picturesque, who has the stomach for radical change at the time it is needed.

7. Even if distressing facts be known, it is quite easy, with a good heart and good intentions, to get gradually into the way of accepting, or, at any rate, of refraining from deliberately protesting against, a state of things which has grown customary. We have all to own, if we are honest with ourselves, that we have an amazing capacity for refusing to look at facts which we prefer to avoid.

8. As almost everybody in the countryside has his or her hands full with one thing and another, it is easy to believe or to act as if a particular job that needs doing were a job for somebody else.

Cannot one hear people saying: "It has always been so. . . . Still the people do manage somehow. . . . It is very difficult to know just what can be done. . . . After all, things are better than they used to be"?

No doubt, "it has always been so." But that is no reason why it should go on being so.

And what exactly is "better than it used to be"? It is the ignominious thing that I have painfully pictured.

Which of us desires to gainsay the fact that such a state of things as I have described is dishonouring to a great country, is a filthy smudge on our civilization?

If such a state of things does not exist in your part of the country, as may very well be, it is possible for you to give your help to make an end of it where it does exist.

I have had to write, have felt impelled to write, of regions I know.

All I can add is this:—

The oldest cottager of my hamlet says she is acquainted with other hamlets which are "quite as bad."

The sanitary inspector declares that my hamlet is "by no means the worst in the Union."

Nobody knows better than I do that my study is incomplete. There is a very great deal more to be said.

But "Plains-of-Heaven Martin" showed, once for all, what comes of trying to get into a picture more than a picture will hold, or, as someone put it the other day, "A good historian must be content to state only a fraction of what he knows."

A master craftsman has given a needed warning to authors of serious bent. "An artist," Morley wrote, "has not always to finish his work in every detail; by not doing so he may succeed in making the spectator his co-worker."

"An artist"! It is a sad snare for writers, who are not of "the two or three men and women of a generation," to think too much of artistry.

It is surely a fatal snare for writers about the country. One of Morley's robust passages is worth copying out: "Literature is a fine art, but it is also a practical art. If forms of composition have the degree of elaboration, accuracy, grasp, and faithfulness that suffice for the given purpose, then we may say that it is enough."

Are the portraits drawn and the incidents reported true? It is the old question which Crabbe, Miss Mitford, and many another rural writer have been asked.

"I will tell you readily," wrote Crabbe. "I endeavoured to paint as nearly as I could and dared. There is not one of whom I have not in mind the original, but I was obliged, in most cases, to take them from their real situations, and, in many instances, to change the circumstances."

"Are your characters and descriptions true?" Miss Mitford quotes. "Yes, yes, yes," replies the author of "Our Village." "As true, as true, as is well possible. You do a little embellish, and can't help it. You avail yourself of happy accidents of atmosphere. You strike out or you put in. But still the picture is a likeness."

"Still the picture is a likeness." That is what matters. For myself, I have tried hard to write—oh, how difficult it is!—not the literal truth, but the essential truth.

As I wrote in one of the articles, much of my life has been spent in hamlets where I have known everybody. I cannot pretend that in my articles I have not made many composite pictures. I have often done so unconsciously.

But what else could I do? Who has made me a ruler and a judge to call forth the blushes or the flushes of those who have been at any time my neighbours?

I am concerned only with the general impression. I am concerned only that my work shall have been done, as the country folk say, deedily. I am concerned only that what I have written shall have had, with all its shortcomings, "reality, truth-speaking and wholeness."

All the things I have written, except the dream, actually happened. But they did not necessarily happen to the people who are described, or in just the circumstances which are recorded. There are "happy accidents of atmosphere." To have striven rigidly to fit persons to facts and facts to persons would have been as idle as to have struggled for accuracy in the scraps of dialect.

It would have been equally wasted effort to try to bring into perfect agreement the impressions recorded in two dozen articles.

Much of the value of these impressions surely lies in the fact that they are records of stages of knowledge and feeling.

It may be that, in further writing, I shall reach yet other stages of knowledge and feeling, marking, I hope, a closer advance towards that understanding of rural life for which I have so long striven.

To the criticism that the articles lack homogeneity, have no continuity of design, the answer is that the criticism is true. But it is not just. Before the War, more than once, arduous attempts were made to survey the life of a village in another fashion than that I have chosen to follow. The method was a laborious com-

bination of preliminary library work, of scrupulous questioning and answering on paper, of elaborate tabulation, of painstaking photography. The result always seemed to fall short of reality. The scientific method broke down because spirit is more than substance.

Only a critic moderately informed on the nature of the rural problem will complain that I have not offered a formal policy of rural reform. I have contented myself with pointing unflinchingly to deeply rooted evil, and I have not hidden the feelings which must be excited in every generous mind and patriotic heart. *Je n'impose rien. J'expose.*

"I must begin," said Darwin, "with a great body of facts, and not from a principle (in which I always suspect some fallacy), and then as much deduction as you please."

"Thus," Cobbett once wrote, "have I led you about the country. All sorts of things have I talked of, to be sure; but there are very few of these things which have not their interest of one sort or another. Hearing what all have to say, reasoning with some, laughing with others, and observing all that passes, at the end you get impressed upon your mind a true picture, not only of the state of the country, but of the state of people's minds. I must leave the making or the refusing of the change to those who have the power."

In looking back through my articles I am genuinely surprised to find, as many readers will no doubt be surprised to find, how much there is in them about the Church. I knew there was a good deal. But I had no idea there was so much. The allusions have occurred naturally in the course of the study of a backward countryside, and stand for a token and a sign.

The way in which the Church has possessed the mind of a sincere student of rural conditions would seem to be impressive evidence of two things: high expectations of the Church on the student's part, and many manifestations of inadequacy on the Church's part. Readers who prefer idealization or generalization to my rough pencilings from the life will do so—and see things happening, before many years have gone, that will astonish them.

If, in setting forth some of the facts that have come my way, I have written sharply, I can only plead with Bunyan, "*I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel.*"

H. C.

LIFE AND POLITICS

THE Conservatives in conference at Brighton will make no trouble of any kind for the Prime Minister. The *Times* may admonish Ministers and reprove the authors of the Conservative Association's annual report for so flagrantly showing themselves to be unaware that the times are out of joint. It is all one: nothing will happen. But how jolly it would be if the Conservative delegates could be induced to give one kick. They might, for instance, give themselves a joyous half-hour by demanding the dismissal of Mr. Amery. That would please the party.

* * *

Our panic-mongers are overjoyed about Liverpool; but it is to Stoke-on-Trent that they should turn for full solace. There they will find the terrible Labour Party in its true colours—and behold, they are True Blue! Lady Cynthia Mosley makes confession of her Socialist faith. She is entirely sincere. But will any comrade in Stoke beg us not to believe that Lady Cynthia was adopted as candidate because she is Lady Cynthia?

* * *

I submit the opinion that the efforts and trials of M. Caillaux in Washington will, in due course, stand out as an extraordinary chapter in the history of this year. We average Britons can find no fault with the

rigid two-fold contention of Mr. Andrew D. Mellon and his associates in the United States Treasury: (1) That debts are debts, and (2) that a creditor Government cannot agree to preferential or contingent terms of settlement. Being citizens of the one country in Europe that acknowledged these principles for itself, while recognizing that they were too hard for the Continental nations, we respectfully salute Mr. Mellon. But, by the same token, we marvel at the general American attitude and at the tone and arguments of the Press which supports the official policy. "The United States will have nothing to do with German reparations or help in their collection or make any contract in any way contingent upon reparations being paid." So, from Washington, says Sir Maurice Low; and, of course, he is stating the bare fact. But the great majority of those whose influence makes this the policy of the Coolidge Administration have held from the beginning that the penal clauses of the Versailles Treaty were just, that Germany must be made to pay, and that the Clemenceau-Poincaré policy of enforcement was the right and only policy. Their papers approved the disastrous seizure of the Ruhr, and from the days of Cannes and Genoa onwards they repeated the Poincarist arguments against the British policy of settlement and reconciliation. The central truth on this matter can, I believe, be stated in a sentence. It is this: that if the business mind of America had been plainly and steadily in favour of agreement in Europe during the past five years, there would have been no Caillaux in Washington to-day. And, incidentally, the crowds of Americans returning home from Europe at the end of the summer would have been among the happiest people in the world, instead of being, as they are, among the most anxious and distressed.

* * *

"It has not been at all a bad Assembly," we are assured by faithful workers for the League, after a three weeks' experience which is at any rate vastly different from that of one or two previous years. There is, I find, a fair measure of unanimity in regard to personal values. Mr. Chamberlain—who, as I noted in advance, was thought to be in process of becoming a good League statesman—revealed himself as the poorest First Delegate of Great Britain so far. Mr. Amery, whose cleverness was recognized by everybody, had to defend a distressful position. The Lord Cecil of 1925 was inevitably compared with the Lord Robert who (ironically enough) as delegate from South Africa had dominated the Assembly. Once more the French had it all round—in force of personality, in oratory, and in representative variety. Britain sends a mere party delegation. France, playing the League of Nations to the utmost, chooses a completely national group. This aspect of the contrast was bad enough. But what is to be said of the contrast between the two Britains—that of 1924, which Europe looked upon with a great hope, and the Britain for whom our Chamberlains and Amerys presume to speak in the assembly of the Nations?

* * *

At Geneva last year I witnessed the scene in the hall of the Assembly when Léon Bourgeois was led up to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald by M. Herriot, after the Labour Prime Minister had made, from the platform, his very effective reference to Bourgeois' long services in the cause of international arbitration. It was a rather theatrical little affair, but nobody minded that: the old man had abundantly earned his moment. It was, of course, to be regretted that he had consented to become a regular official delegate to the League, instead of remaining an

independent advocate and critic. One thought of him during the Peace Conference of 1919, being turned on at the plenary sessions to deliver his formal speech on an organized Europe—while his sardonic chief seemed to be asking, “Who will say now that Georges Clemenceau does not believe in the League of Nations?”

* * *

Dr. L. P. Jacks, as one would have expected, has made what is by far the most interesting criticism of the articles by ten popular writers on “My Religion.” But I don’t see why they should make on his mind a total impression which he can only describe by one word—queer. For, surely, the quasi-confessions are, in the main, exactly what one might have looked for. All except three of the writers are of the best-seller class: the very last, I should have said, to apply to if you wanted fresh stuff, but just the people for your money if you wished to provide a few easy sermon outlines. Mr. Compton Mackenzie, the only Catholic in the group, is also the only one who professes orthodoxy. Dr. Jacks is surprised that the heterodox nine show no interest in New Testament criticism and its results. Like their public, they have ceased to be moved by orthodox doctrine, and do not trouble about the scholars who, a generation ago, were judged to be the sappers and miners. Nevertheless, the Nine against Orthodoxy are a sign for the Churches.

* * *

If Sir Henry Maybury has brought back from America the belief that the whole movement of traffic in New York is much speedier than it is in London, we must infer that he did not take full advantage of his opportunities of weighing the differences. In a city of the rectangular plan, the system of automatic signal lights can be perfectly worked—and an impressive spectacle the rhythmic suspension of movement along the avenues is. But if Sir Henry Maybury had tried to keep an appointment down-town with the aid of a taxi from, say, the southern end of Central Park, he would have found out that the obstacles of New York are, on the whole, worse than those of London. No one, however, will contest Sir Henry’s practical conclusion that if American lessons in traffic regulation are of any use to us, we shall take them from Boston rather than from New York. And the New Yorker will humorously acquiesce.

* * *

A good many gossips seem concerned to prove that the Leverhulme sale is not to be regarded as a blow to the world supremacy of the London auction-rooms. The point is trivial. The art treasures of Europe go to America: what can the address of the auctioneer matter to anyone? It may, however, be worth noting that Mr. Mitchell Kennerley, who brought off the deal, is an Englishman from the Five Towns. Before he became director of the Anderson Galleries he was a publisher in New York, and as such a valuable ally to the younger American poets and novelists.

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A DISPUTED DOCUMENT

SIR.—Discussing recently, with one who took the conventional view of Germany’s guilt, the causes which led to the Great War, I asked him if he could point to any authentic evidence for the theory that those responsible for German policy had for years been preparing for an offensive and aggressive war. Is there anything in the documentary or other disclosures which could not be reconciled with the

contention that successive Governments had a keen apprehension of the dangers which they believed to encompass Germany, and that all their preparations, diplomatic and military, were designed to avert these dangers, and to maintain German interests should war become inevitable? I think it is clear that in the summer of 1914 they had come to the conclusion that the peril was increasing, especially from the Slavs of Russia and the Balkans, and that their best policy was to precipitate a struggle which must come sooner or later; but the earlier preparations seemed, so far as any evidence had come to light, not to be inconsistent with the German case, that their intention was identical with that which lay behind the continuous enhancement of the British Fleet, namely, to ensure against all contingencies the safety of the homeland and the maintenance of the interests of the Empire in various parts of the world.

In answer to this, my interlocutor referred me to a review in the *Times* of September 13th, 1923, of Mr. Asquith’s (Earl of Oxford and Asquith) “The Genesis of the War.” The writer adduced from Mr. Asquith’s book some “damning German quotations” in proof of “the actively aggressive temper which reigned in Germany for years before the war,” and gave as the most remarkable of these an extract from “the official memorandum drawn up for the purpose of securing sanction for the new Military Law from the Reichstag in March, 1913.” The extract was as follows:—

“The people must be accustomed to the belief that an offensive war on our part is a necessity for the purpose of combating the provocations of the adversary. Affairs must be handled in such a manner that under the pressure of powerful armaments, economic sacrifices, and a critical political situation, the beginning of hostilities will be considered a deliverance.”

On this the reviewer observed that no comment was necessary beyond one question: “What English Government of any party would have dared, or even wished, to issue such a document? If any had, would it have lasted a week?”

These questions can be answered in only one way; but on investigation of the matter, I find that they might be applied also to any German Government, and possibly with the same answer, for no such document was issued, or presented to the Reichstag.

Mr. Asquith avowedly took his quotation from M. Poincaré, who introduced it thus, at p. 153 of “Les Origines de la Guerre”: “The truth is that at the moment when she was securing the passage of her new Military Law Germany was still seeking to gain time. She wished to arm further before risking the criminal adventure. But when one reads the memorandum which she caused to be compiled at that time, with the help of materials furnished by Ludendorff, in order to obtain from the Reichstag in the month of March, 1913, the passage of the new Military Law, one finds therein revealing phrases.” After giving the passages reproduced by Mr. Asquith, M. Poincaré says the document proves that the people were being familiarized with the idea of an offensive war. Though he does not say explicitly that the memorandum was laid before the Reichstag, this is implied, as the reviewer’s comment shows. He adduces no evidence that the document had any official sanction, or represented the views of the German Government.

Tracing the history of Mr. Asquith’s quotation further back, we find it in the French *Yellow Book* No. 2 of 1914, but it is not there alleged that the memorandum was presented to the Reichstag. On the contrary, we are told that it was “an official and secret report,” which the French War Minister, M. Etienne, had obtained from a sure source, and laid before the Foreign Minister, M. Jonnart, on April 2nd, 1913. There is a reference to the matter in “The Case for the Central Powers,” by Count Max Montgelas, of which an English edition has lately been published. He says in a note (p. 105) that the memorandum is grossly falsified in the French *Yellow Book*, and as an example of carelessness in the compilation of the *Yellow Book*, he points out that Jonnart, who is spoken of as Foreign Minister in April, 1913, had resigned on March 22nd.

It seems clear that there was a memorandum drawn up at this time by Ludendorff, which came in some form into the hands of the French secret service, and he dealt with the subject in a brochure published in Berlin in 1919 ("French Falsification of my Memorandum of 1912 on the War Menace"). In this Ludendorff compares the wording of the document published in the Yellow Book with that of a memorandum he compiled in December, 1912, in his capacity of Chief of the Mobilization Department of the General Staff, which was laid before the German Chancellor and the Prussian Minister of War. As represented by Ludendorff, the document contained nothing of an aggressive nature. It set out the military position of the Triple Alliance, and in particular of Germany, in comparison with that of the Triple Entente, laid stress upon what he considered to be the great military superiority of the Entente, and urged the need for a further increase in the German Army.

The Government accepted this view of the "menace," and resolved further to strengthen the Army. They also introduced the Defence Levy Bill of March, 1913, and the grounds on which the Reichstag was asked to pass the Bill were contained in a memorandum presented with the Bill and published in the Proceedings of the Reichstag, March 28th. This contains no suggestion of the need to prepare for an offensive war. The following quotation will suffice to show its character:—

"A strong defensive force has enabled the German people to work in peace for decades, and remains also for the future a security for and guarantee of the maintenance of an honourable peace, and therewith of further progress in all branches of political, economic, and cultural life. It appears, therefore, not unjust to ask of the possessing elements in the nation that, for the purpose of strengthening the national armament, they should make a non-recurrent contribution, proportionate to their wealth, to the Reich, which, by the strong protection it affords, has rendered possible the accumulation of their wealth, and which guarantees them in the secure possession of what they have earned."

That there were at this time strong pan-German and militarist elements which favoured a "preventive" or offensive war will not be denied by any impartial inquirer; but the French also had their Chauvinists, and we had our Jingoes, and there were turbulent factions in Russia. It would be unfair to take any of these as representing the policy of their Governments, and M. Poincaré's quotation affords no proof that the preparations made by the German Government had any other intention than to attain victory should conflict come.

I should like to observe that the point I have put forward is negative rather than positive—that, so far as we yet know, the theory of a long-nourished design to crush France, to break up the British Empire, and to dominate the world, rests upon conjecture and inference, notwithstanding all the disclosures in secret documents, such as the Willy-Nicky letters. It does not follow that we or any of our allies were wrong in entering upon the war. When the "occasion" came the Central Powers were certainly the aggressors, and had they won, it would have been an uplift for the military caste. Nor were we wrong in attributing these designs to Germany when the contest was being waged. I would refer any reader interested in this aspect of the question to some passages in Lady Frances Balfour's "Life of Lord Aberdeen" (vol. 2, pp. 236-9). During the Crimean War Lord Aberdeen, as Prime Minister, made a speech in which he suggested that some of the aspersions cast upon the Czar were not fair. The speech raised a storm, and Queen Victoria, in a letter of mild protest, told Aberdeen that the public, "under strong excitement of patriotic feelings, is impatient and annoyed to hear, at this moment, the First Minister of the Crown enter into an impartial [the word underlined] examination of the Emperor of Russia's conduct." Lord Clarendon, also, in a private letter, said: "You will, of course, not pander to what you may think a popular illusion; but it is not safe, and can answer no good end, to damp the excitement under which great sacrifices are being made, and more will be required."

While, however, it may be a patriotic duty during war to maintain the ardour of the people by accepting, expressly or implicitly, unproved imputations on the enemy, it is good statesmanship after the struggle is ended, and a settle-

ment is to be reached under which the nations may dwell for the future in peace and security, to make an "impartial examination" of the causes of the war, endeavouring to see them from the enemy's point of view as well as our own. Had there been more statesmanship of this kind at Versailles, Europe would have had a happier history during the last few years, and a happier prospect now.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES SYKES

13, Dundonald Road, Redland, Bristol.

THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM

SIR,—It would appear a great exaggeration to state that if as many men proportionately were employed on the soil in this country as are employed in some Continental countries unemployment would disappear here.

By the full utilization of the properties of our land, no one can doubt that a considerable increase of national wealth would be obtained, and this by the forces of free competition would ensure greater employment, as would result from an increased efficiency in any industry. But contemplate the transference of large numbers of workers, at present unemployed if you will, to agriculture and the consequent increase of home-grown supplies of food. The direction of our trade would inevitably change to the detriment of industries manufacturing for export. So many tons less of imported foodstuffs would entail an equivalent, or at least a nearly equivalent, decrease of exports, accompanied naturally by decreased employment in these trades.

It would seem therefore that the actual benefit accruing from a policy designed to develop the resources of our soil should be measured only by the expected increase in national wealth, which, I venture to think, would scarcely be as great as that resulting from the full employment, in the trades to which they are attached, of all labourers at present unemployed.

Two great advantages would certainly accrue from a policy framed to increase our agricultural production. For, being less dependent on foreign supplies, the real ratio of international exchange would tend to move in our favour; and in so far as large numbers of small independent farmers were established on the land, remuneration would tend to be settled by the forces of free competition rather than, as at present to a considerable degree, by monopoly action.

I fear I have not expressed my thoughts on this subject with the clarity and conciseness necessary in the discussion of economic problems, but I write this in the hope that some more competent economists, of whom I believe many are numbered among your readers, may take up this aspect of a problem which, no doubt, will shortly become the theme of acute political controversy.—Yours, &c.,

W. L.

September 26th, 1925.

FREUDIAN PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

SIR,—The comments by Mr. Tansley in his letter of September 12th on the criticisms of his views recently published in your columns show no attempt to meet any serious arguments against the fundamental assumptions of the psycho-analytic creed, and prove that he ranks himself with the Freudian majority who hold that nobody can discuss "psycho-analysis" without first believing in its principles and then practising its system on themselves, others, or both. It will doubtless be clear to many readers that this last position is not only eccentric, but absurd: and that it renders impossible any reasonable controversy between Mr. Tansley and the many others who think as I do. I therefore make no attempt to reply in detail to the unsound logic displayed in the fourth paragraph of Mr. Tansley's letter, in which he uses the common weapon of a glaringly false analogy in his endeavour to refute my views. The position I take and desire to make evident to your readers is that the Freudian doctrines as a whole rest chiefly on two unverified hypotheses: (1) an "unconscious mind," specifically described in detail; and (2) a *scheme of dream-interpretation*, set forth with equal specificity. These two hypotheses are employed (by Freudians) to support one another, erected, as it were, like cards on a smooth surface,

angularly meeting, with mutual inclination, at their top ends.

But, although a vast number of books have been published and are still being produced in propagation of what is now so frequently heard of as the "New Psychology," the comparatively few criticisms that have been seriously written on the most original and therefore most important of them have never been tackled by the leading disciples of this creed except by the method of making general charges against their opponents of prejudice or "dislike" of the Freudian conclusions. It thus appears that the Freudian position, while adopting the flag of science, is but a truly mystic dogma, requiring the necessity of a preliminary assent to positive statements which imply the actual question at issue—i.e., Are these statements really verifiable, and, if so, why has there been no attempt to sally out from the Freudian fortress, and endeavour to meet opponents with weapons of more value than the esoteric outcries of Mystic Prophets?—Yours, &c.,

September 17th, 1925.

BRYAN DONKIN.

P.S.—May I call your readers' attention to a review, in the TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT for September 10th, of Dr. Freud's third volume of "Collected Papers," translated into English?

SIR,—Fortunately for your readers, Dr. Wohlgemuth's last letter, appearing in your issue of September 19th, can be dealt with quite shortly.

My comparison of psycho-analysis with histology was concerned with one point only—each depends essentially on the use of a particular instrument. The results depend in the one case on the optical properties of the microscope, in the other on the psychological characters of the method of free association, together with other features of the technique. Those who will not use the instrument cannot expect to obtain first-hand knowledge of the results of its use. Dr. Wohlgemuth's comparison of psycho-analysis with astrology is not to the point, because the casting of a horoscope is not an instrument in this sense. Astrology depends on the alleged correlation of the combinations of the stars under which an individual is born with the fate of the individual in life. Its truth or falsity can be tested by comparing the actual events of life with the horoscope. In the case of psycho-analysis there is an instrument which must be used before it can be intelligently criticized. Dr. Wohlgemuth's belief that the instrument is unsound is, I contend, erroneous, and the arguments and experiments by which he tries to support his belief are invalid and illusory.

His so-called "control experiments" on the "analysis" of numbers, which he alludes to in his letter, illustrate my contention. Freud's examples, quoted in "A Critical Examination of Psycho-analysis," were obtained by the method of free association with the digits and combinations of digits in the numbers occurring spontaneously to Freud

and his patient. Dr. Wohlgemuth took these same numbers and juggled with them till he obtained correspondences with numbers representing events and situations in his own life. There is no evidence that he used the method of free association at all. He does not say so. It is obvious, and notorious from the examples of "cryptograms," that one can obtain any numerical or orthographical result from a set of figures or letters by appropriate manipulation. Of course, it may be said that this is what Freud and his patient did. To that one can only reply that it is reasonable to assume they used the method of free association on which Freud's whole technique is based (in fact, it is clear from one of the accounts that they did), and that Freud did not try to mislead people by deliberate manipulation. The method of free association has nothing in common with such manipulation, though Dr. Wohlgemuth's procedure has a superficial resemblance to Freud's which may perhaps mislead the unwary reader who wants to be convinced of the charlatanism of Freud. The method of free association has been worked out systematically by Jung, and repeatedly tested over a number of years by many trustworthy observers. The fact is well established that it does reveal real psychical connections of which the mind was originally unaware. Dr. Wohlgemuth's so-called "control experiments" have no right whatever to the name.—Yours, &c.,

A. G. TANSLEY.

Grantchester, Cambridge.

September 24th, 1925.

ENGLISH CRITICISM AND AMERICAN LETTERS

SIR,—If Mr. Walpole will look at my article again I think he will see it is aimed against all merely nationalistic views of literature. Unless Mr. Walpole wished to assume that I have worked in close co-operation with Americans for at least twelve years. But this does not mean that I approve of all American writers or even of all those Mr. Walpole cites. If one dislikes the popular bourgeois literature of England and France, it is surely logical to dislike it in America also.

Mr. Walpole's choice of American poets is not very critical. The most interesting modern American poets are Amy Lowell, John Gould Fletcher, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, H. D., Marianne Moore, E. E. Cummings, W. C. Williams, Conrad Aiken, and Mina Loy. Both Frost and Miss Millay are good, but Miss Sara (not Sarah) Teasdale is simply a magazine poet. Carl Sandburg, Edgar Lee Masters, and Vachel Lindsay (though I do not approve of them) are all more deserving of notice than Miss Teasdale or Miss Wylie. I shall be happy to give Mr. Walpole or any of your readers interested in modern American poetry the names and titles of the best anthologies and the forty or fifty books best worth reading.—Yours, &c.,

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

THE PATHS OF GLORY: 1782.

BY JOHN BERESFORD.

PESSIMISTS at all times, and most men at some times, declare their belief in their country's impending ruin. No word in the English language has, indeed, been more notoriously abused than this word ruin; it is bandied about in Parliament, in the Press, in casual conversation with a lightheartedness really astonishing. Nevertheless there have been times when the word, if not actually appropriate, has been at least not wholly unjustified. Such a time in the history of England was the period Autumn 1781 to Spring 1782.

To the intelligent spectator of that time it certainly seemed as though the ship of State could hardly weather the storm. Without a single ally, or even well-wisher, we were fighting three first-class European Powers, France, Spain, and the Dutch; we were at death-grips

with our kith and kin in the thirteen American Colonies; we were grappling with Hyder Ali, Dutch, and French in India. Our shores were not safe—there were rumours that the French had landed on the south coast, or the Dutch in Yorkshire; we had virtually lost the command of the sea; the national debt had assumed proportions profoundly alarming to the thrifitly minded men of the 1780's.

"Can we be proud when all Europe scorns us? It was wont to envy us, sometimes to hate us, but never despised us before. James the First was contemptible, but he did not lose an America! His eldest grandson sold us, his younger lost us—but we kept ourselves. Now we have run to meet the ruin—and it is coming! I beg your Lordship's pardon if I have said too much—but I

do not believe I have. You have never sold yourself, and therefore have not been accessory to our destruction. You must be happy *now* not to have a son, who would live to grovel in the dregs of England."

Of course it is Horace Walpole who is speaking, in a letter to Lord Strafford dated November 27th, 1781—no man in England could express himself more brilliantly, and very few with a more genuine regard for truth. Admittedly he was a Whig, and it was under the Tory Government of Lord North that these things were happening; but the times were far too serious for empty political lies, and in any case Horace Walpole was speaking in accordance with what appeared to be the facts. The fatal news had just arrived of Lord Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown with the main British Army; the thirteen American Colonies, regarded as the roof and crown of the Empire, had ceased to exist, and America had definitively emerged. The clouds became darker still. In February, 1782, Minorca surrendered, and simultaneously in the West Indies—rightly regarded by statesmen and merchants as gold nuggets—three islands, St. Christopher, Nevis, and Montserrat, were captured by the French.

Unknown to Horace Walpole, however—or if he knew, it would have made little difference, for he had not got second sight—a step had been taken which was destined to enable England to come out of the conflict with head "bloody, but unbow'd."

Early in November, 1781, Admiral Rodney, just back from arduous sea-service, was endeavouring to recover from the gout at Bath. He was not long left in peace. He was reappointed in this month to the chief command in the supreme theatre of naval war—the West Indies. He owed his appointment chiefly to George III.*; moreover it was George III. who, early in December, just after the news of the Yorktown disaster had reached England, expressed such anxiety as to the fate of the West Indies that Rodney said he would sail then and there, even though a great part of his fleet was not yet ready. George III., whether justly or unjustly, is invariably spoken of as mainly responsible for the loss of the American Colonies; he is seldom given the credit, which he richly deserves, for this appointment which eventually saved England.

The Admiral at once hastened to Portsmouth, embarked with four men-of-war, picked up two more at Plymouth, only to be driven back by contrary winds into Torbay. We are now more or less indifferent to wind, but in the eighteenth century the fate of Empires and the wealth of Nations depended on a sou'-wester. Perhaps, however, the delay was fortunate, because it enabled Rodney to stir up the sleepy, and indeed corrupt, dockyards. Thus his squadron consisted of some twelve fine vessels, when, braving mountainous seas off Ushant, he started in the middle of January on his memorable voyage. "The fate of this empire is in your hands, and I have no reason to wish that it should be in any other." So wrote Lord Sandwich on January 2nd, 1782. Lord Sandwich—"Jemmy Twitcher"—was First Lord of the Admiralty, but a fine taste for music and mistresses, though not inconsistent with, was not a particular qualification for efficiency in a First Lord, and Lord Sandwich's period of naval administration had hitherto been depressing. Nevertheless we forgive him much for these wise words.

After a voyage of five weeks, on February 19th, Admiral Rodney reached the West Indies. There he joined Admiral Hood, and thus commanded a joint armament of some thirty-six vessels. But the situation was not other than alarming. Hood's fleet was without

bread; the three islands mentioned already had been lost; spies and treachery abounded. Above all, the Comte de Grasse commanded a French fleet equal in power to Rodney's, and was watching an opportunity to effect a junction with the Spanish Fleet from Hispaniola, in order that the supreme jewel of the West Indies, Jamaica, might fall into the allied lap.

"I am of the opinion," wrote Admiral Rodney to his wife from his flagship, the "Formidable," on March 9th, 1782, "that the great events which must decide the empire of the ocean, will be either off Jamaica or St. Domingo, and as I know you are a great politician, I make you thus mistress of the affair. . . ." He adds that he will write to his daughters Jane, Margaret, and Sarah—"my dear girls"—very soon, meanwhile he has conversed daily with their pictures, "and they both seemed pleased, as if they wished to answer."

A month later, the great event began. The Comte de Grasse had been biding his time in Fort Royal Bay, Martinique. On April 8th, a message reached Rodney through a chain of watching frigates that the French Fleet was under weigh, its object, of course, being junction with the Spanish Fleet. For three days the English Fleet pursued the French Fleet, desultory fighting taking place. Then on April 12th, off St. Domingo, early in the morning, the French Admiral stood at bay. The fleets were almost of precisely equal strength; Rodney had two or three more ships, but the French possessed greater weight of metal. Comte de Grasse's flagship, the "Ville de Paris" of 106 guns, was the largest vessel in the two fleets. She had been originally presented by the city of Paris to Louis XV. at the staggering cost of £176,000.

It is not the object of this essay to describe the battle; technical descriptions of battles are boring, and untechnical descriptions are worthless. Suffice it to say that Rodney carried out his great manoeuvre, revolutionary in the annals of naval warfare, of breaking the line—that is, after engaging in parallel column with the enemy, striking straight through them and cutting them in half. The French Fleet was routed, the "Ville de Paris" surrendered with four other ships, the rest fled as best they could, disappearing into the moonless night.

In a letter dated from the "Formidable," at sea, on April 14th, 1782, Admiral Rodney, in language of stately excellence and glow—as became an Admiral who during the battle had quoted his Homer familiarly—reported to My Lords of the Admiralty the action that had taken place:—

"It has pleased God, out of his Divine Providence, to grant to his Majesty's arms a most complete victory over the fleet of his enemy, commanded by Count de Grasse, who is himself captured, with the 'Ville de Paris,' and four other ships of his fleet, besides one sunk in action. This important victory was obtained on the 12th instant, after a battle which lasted with unremitting fury from seven in the morning till half-past six in the evening, when the setting sun put an end to the contest. Both fleets have greatly suffered; but it is with the highest satisfaction I can assure their Lordships, that though the masts, sails, rigging, and hulls of the British fleet are damaged, yet the loss of men has been but small, considering the length of the battle, and the close action they so long sustained, in which both fleets looked upon the honour of their king and country to be most essentially concerned." After a tribute to the gallantry of officers and men, and an estimate of the havoc wrought in the French Fleet when the "Formidable" alone "fired near eighty broadsides," the Admiral ends his dispatch thus: "That the British flag may ever

* See Lord Fitzmaurice's "Shelburne," II., 127 (1912 edition)

flourish in every quarter of the globe, is the most ardent wish of him, who has the honour of being, with great regard," &c.

The news of Rodney's decisive victory did not reach England till May 19th, when it was received with immense public joy. Meanwhile—or rather in March—Lord North's Government had fallen, and the Rockingham administration had been formed with the express object of making an all-round peace on the best terms possible for an apparently defeated nation. But this was not all. A curt letter dated May 1st, 1782, was dispatched to Admiral Rodney, telling him that Hugh Pigot, Esq., Admiral of the Blue, had been appointed to relieve him of his command.

As soon as the news of the victory reached England, the Whig Government did all they could to retrieve their bitter party error, for the reader is to understand that politics on either side dominated naval and military appointments at this time. On May 22nd Rodney received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament, on June 19th the king made him a peer, and on June 27th he was voted a pension of £2,000 a year, later settled on the title for ever.

The casual visitor to St. Paul's Cathedral, wandering about the wide spaces beneath the Dome, may come upon a marble group of three figures by Rossi, which will at once claim his attention. The central figure of the three is Admiral Rodney, erect and magnificent, his hand upon his sword, while his eyes scan the horizon for ghostly men-of-war. At his right hand is the figure of Victory bearing a palm, and on his left is the figure of Fame in the act of recording the gallant deeds of her hero. But the visitor will err if he concludes that "the paths of glory" lead inevitably to St. Paul's Cathedral.

Night has fallen upon the scene of carnage and victory, April 12th, 1782. On board the captured French man-of-war, the "Cæsar," a terrible disaster has just occurred. An English marine, searching the hold for liquor, has dropped his lighted candle upon a cask of spirits. The flames have spread with dreadful speed, and have reached the powder magazine. The greater part of the crew, English and French, are engulfed and perish, some are drowned in the sea, others are burned to death, and yet others are torn from the wreck by sharks which swarm in these seas after a battle.

"One would wish," wrote an eye-witness of this ghastly spectacle, "to pass over these horrors in silence—not wantonly to wound the feelings of the tender-hearted part of mankind; but I wish I had the eloquence of Tully, to set them in such a true and forcible light as to melt the rulers of the earth, and to make statesmen consider well what they are doing when they involve their fellow-creatures in war." *

LA RENTRÉE

THE first week of October is not only celebrated by the shooting of pheasants; it has another character; it marks the return to London of the summer emigrants. All who by habit live in London and have escaped for two months movement on its rapid and exhilarating current feel with some excitement the renewal of the old force which sets their

minds, their faces, and at last their feet in one direction, drawing them irresistibly inwards. Some of us are on lagoons, others on mountain slopes, some on long poplar-edged roads; some in hotels, in yachts, on golf-courses, beaches and moors; some are in winter tweeds already, some on rich flowery parts of the world remain in muslin, some still wear bathing-suits—but all by the end of September feel the inevitable lure.

"La Belle Dame sans Merci hath thee in thrall."

So we prepare to return. The "evenings are drawing in," the mornings are chill; leaves flutter down and the sky is grey and wild. As one walks swiftly along the edge of the marshes and on to the open beach, as one watches the tossing wintry waves and hears the cry of the curlews and gulls, a vision rises before the eyes. Another London winter is before us, and for some eccentric reason it has a glamour. Yet how well we know its conventional routine!

The picture exhibitions will be opening, the theatres with their beauties and jokes, the dress shows, the sharp walks, muffled up to the chin, down crowded streets, drives to dinners and parties, the familiar taste of these—and yet the imagination casts a spell.

Even the entry into London, in the late afternoon, with the strapped-up trunks, through the streets when the shop-windows blaze, is like a spur. Whither are we driving? To what experiences? Our emotions, like the engine, are accelerated. We believe that our friends will have brighter eyes and sharper or softer tongues, that the exhibitions will be caskets of treasure and the reunions of company revelations—wells of truth; our own eyes must of necessity be brighter, our spirits more effervescent; we shall be in new and ravishing clothes which make the old cold walk down Bond Street as pleasant and inviting as one down a summer garden path.

We forget the fogs, the darkness, the cold, the fatigue; that everyone is older than last year. Just as a man dogs a woman of no value, persistently, to his own torment and despair, so we dog this phantom:

"I saw pale Kings and Princes too,
Pale warriors, death pale were they all,
Who cried—'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

"I saw their starved lips in the gloom
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill side.

"And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing."

Is it not thus that we shall be after numberless seasons of pursuit, after the recurring barren routs, repetition of well-known events, monotony of familiar chatter—awake on the cold hillside, alone and palely loitering? So say the philosophers and poets, so say fathers, husbands, and wives, so says Wisdom.

And yet? Let the gaiety of the world reply, O philosopher! London is built—not of bubbles—but of bricks and stones; take a turn—where? into Curzon Street, perhaps. We see the witty little brick houses, the gates of Crewe House, the arch into Shepherd Market and its affluent alleys where are the ladies' maids' shops and the butlers' and footmen's inns. . . . Listen to the words alone—houses, bricks, gates, arches, alleys, ladies, maids, do they not seduce? But the objects themselves—how zealously the eye rests upon them, and with what curiosity! And from the detail of Mayfair

* The main authorities consulted for this essay are: Mundy's "Life and Correspondence of the late Admiral Lord Rodney," Vol. II.; Lecky's "England in the Eighteenth Century," Vol. V.; D. Hannay's "Rodney"; various notices in the "D.N.B.," for the social atmosphere Horace Walpole's "Letters" in the Paget Toynbee edition, and Parson Woodforde's "Diary," of which I am now preparing the 2nd Vol.

and Shepherd Market, do we not long to go within, enter the houses, pursue the inmates, confront them, become entangled with them—and then, considering all the other labyrinthian streets and labyrinthian minds inhabiting there, alive, impressionable, active, sigh for "world enough and time"?

It is surely only our fatal propensity to custom, to forgetfulness, and to love crowds (vile reducers of capacity, standard, and imagination) which can make seem monotonous a world whose condition is variety.

Are not the characters of some of our oldest friends mysteries? What combinations are not possible? Are not we ourselves, changeable as we know ourselves to be, ever ready for new issues? Just as we may be more or less prone, this year, to influenza, so may we be more or less prone to fall in love, to like music, or to read Baudelaire. Perhaps our summer reading or contacts have put us in a state for particular experiences; when the fruit is ripe it will fall. Beware! beware! and there is no moment like the present—"le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui!"

Tolstoy once wrote in a letter, characteristically, "I cannot understand the life in Moscow of those people who don't understand it themselves. But the life of the majority—of the peasants, pilgrims, and any others who understand their life—I understand and love." This remark is in a way wise; but essentially it attacks the life of townspeople, of the "cultured." Is it not time we rose up against the sticks of old prophets? Do we not understand our lives very well, better than peasants do or sailors? And is not our consciousness more praiseworthy than the golden silence of those monotonous people? In the eternal scales, may we not be after all the sheep and not the goats?

I take my stick and, followed by a blue Bedlington, set off over the stiles. For all the confusion of my thoughts, I set my mind on London with pleasure. I know soon that this waste land, this desert of sea and sky and screeching birds, will be replaced by a magnificent hubbub. I know that in the darkness of winter life electric lights flare and will light up for me the accumulations of a great many centuries—the wrack of a large ocean.

Books with their stings will be there; intricate conventions of intercourse masking sentiments and violences; elaborate structures of entertainment and apparel; curious subtilized possessions. . . .

No wonder I walk faster and carelessly receive the beating of the west wind; no wonder I indulge in the last autumnal beauties and am not caught by their desolation and melancholy—not caught, for I am already on the wing—and you, Neighbour?

POLLY FLINDERS.

THE DRAMA

THE ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT, NEW STYLE

New Theatre: "The Moon and Sixpence." By Somerset Maugham and Edith Ellis.

"THE MOON AND SIXPENCE" has had a bad Press, mostly for two reasons which are scarcely relevant—first, that it is not like the novel on which it is based; and secondly, that it is not like Gauguin. Not having read the story, I am not irritated by the first objection; and am acutely aware that I should not be irritated by the second. Fair-mindedness is, however, rendered difficult by the exploitation of Gauguin at the New Theatre. A rather poor painting by "the master" hangs in the hall, and

in the last scene the walls are plastered with what seem to be Meier Graefe reproductions. Still, the fault of "The Moon and Sixpence" is not that it alters the life of Gauguin, but that it spoils it.

Strickland, aged forty, is prosperous in a bank. Driven mad by his silly wife and tedious occupations, he bolts, and we see him starving to death in Montmartre. A bad but kind-hearted painter takes him in and saves his life. Strickland occupies his protector's studio, and smashes up his relations with his wife. He then deserts the wife, who shoots herself, and he is off to the South Seas.

In Part II., he has arrived at Tahiti; penniless, but content, and free at last to produce his sublime masterpieces; he marries a native, and intends to live happy ever afterwards. Unfortunately, he contracts leprosy, and the curtain goes down with his having two years to live—just time to finish his greatest paintings. He takes every precaution to segregate his wife and children, strikes an attitude in the middle of the stage, utters a string of noble sentiments, and the curtain falls. "All for art, or the world well lost."

The real Gauguin story is very different and rather better. Gauguin too leaves a bank, preferring "freedom and poverty," and goes to work in Brittany. The poverty, however, being intolerable, he finally moves to the South Seas. Far from obtaining happiness in this Eldorado, he continues to be just as miserable as he was in Brittany or the bank. His letters home to the long-suffering Daniel de Monfreid are one continual complaint, one incessant clamour for money. He had brought with him to the Marquesas a disease the headquarters of which are in Europe, but which had probably already appeared in the South Seas (see Diderot, "Suite au Voyage de Bougainville"), and he cynically infects with it the wretched population of the Marquesas Islands. Finally, he dies in agony, cursing to the end. There is the real story, and then, as the final blow, we have to admit that in spite of everything, Gauguin was not quite a first-rate artist. The facts can be discoloured to make him a gallery girl's hero, but that is very different. At the same moment, a really first-rate artist was leading a thoroughly unpicturesque life in Provence on perfectly good terms with his wife, finding in his native village the spiritual satisfaction Gauguin sought vainly in the South Seas, and fortunately possessing that moderate competence without which an artist's life is intolerable.

How unfair to us are these great dull artists, these Shakespeare's and Cézannes! Why cannot they misbehave themselves properly, like Gauguin or Ernest Dowson? If one does not wish to be sentimental, there is a really good disagreeable play to be written about Gauguin, but perhaps the part would hardly suit Mr. Henry Ainley, and would probably not pass the Censor. As it is, there is an "R. L. S." glaze over "The Moon and Sixpence," though the hero has been considerably brutalized to suit a Fascist generation. The play is as romantic about "Art" as is "Trilby," "Vie de Bohème," or any of the romances that pleased our simple-minded grandparents.

The play, in truth, is so silly that it is impossible to take it seriously for a moment. Mr. Ainley hacked and bellowed his way through the part with a full-bloodedness we must all commend; but, through no fault of his own, he never began to be a human being. He was always "the portrait of the artist as a middle-aged man." His "dusky wife," one of those uninhibited, amoral, open-eyed Tahitians, was made to giggle and simper like the finished article from Miss Weisse's admirable academy. The comic relief was puerile, but Miss Yarde showed great virtuosity in making bricks without straw. She thoroughly earned her laughs. We are not allowed for an instant to forget that the play is about Gauguin. So we can only compare "The Moon and Sixpence" to the original and once more prefer truth to fiction.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA

MR. CARADOC EVANS has discovered that in Wales, as elsewhere, a ha'porth of godly cant may cover a vast deal of meanness and greed, and is not afraid to say so. This as far as one can gather: also, that he seems to say it with a certain degree of liveliness, verisimilitude, and wit, and that Mr. Bruce Winston interprets the part of Twm with imagination and skill. But it was extremely difficult to be sure of what was going on, as the pit of the Royalty Theatre competed successfully with the actors in "Taffy," at least in making themselves heard. It appears that Mr. Evans is wrong to suppose that Welshmen are as bad as Zola's Frenchmen in "La Terre," or as Ibsen's countrymen in "An Enemy of the People," or as Strindberg's Swedes, or as Mr. Theodore Powys's Englishmen, and he cannot make amends by having his young leads as impeccably pure and idealistic as your best American. Young Wales, as ever suspicious and hysterical, naturally resents this, but it is a pity that its ill-mannered behaviour in the pit is such as to make any ordinary observer suppose that whatever indictment Mr. Evans may be trying to make with regard to his people is perfectly justified. It is to be hoped that the management will stick to its play.

* * *

The scenery of the first act of "Mrs. Warren's Profession" at the Regent Theatre gave us "conventional" trees and three-dimensional geraniums of a startling horror. The third act showed us real live clouds and windmills, with two dinky "decorative" shrubs in pots before them. The interiors had solid doors standing like rocks among billows of curtain. This setting was very appropriate to the play. Life here (or as close as we can get to it); symbol there. But in the world's masterpieces one can never quite see why the symbol is not life, and how it is that life swells into symbol. "Only connect!" Mr. Shaw has three great qualifications: wit (in all grades), a superb gift of the gab, and an eye for situation; but his characters are built on emptiness, and a play is not two or three situations spaced out on a stream of words. Mr. Shaw's plays are, of course, generally better worth seeing than anything else "on"; but, as M. Valéry says, "l'homme est incessamment et nécessairement opposé à ce qui est par le souci de ce qui n'est pas!" And that, if Mr. Shaw would consistently write with the comic genius he displays in patches, might have been the grand theme of "Mrs. Warren's Profession."

* * *

Last week the Maddermarket Theatre gave a very interesting performance of "Measure for Measure," a play that is all too rarely seen upon the English stage. Proximity to the Cathedral necessitated a good deal of the second half of the play being cut, which brought out rather clearly its structural weakness. The machinery grinds rather shrilly when not well greased with Shakespeare's equivocal and murky humour. Still, when all has been said, we must be very grateful to Mr. Monck for having put the play on, and for the great interest of the production. Its most original feature was the conception of Angelo, not as a middle-aged formalist, but as a fanatical young Puritan of about twenty-eight, trying to repress, by means of general persecution, all memory of a sensual fault committed in extreme youth. The part was taken by a very talented young actor, a new recruit to Mr. Monck's theatre, and his intelligent performance illuminated the play.

* * *

Except for the fact that Miss Angela Baddeley appears in it, the most recent production at the Everyman Theatre has nothing to do either with drama or dramatic art. The revival of "The Limpet," a "comedy" in three acts, by Vernon Woodhouse and Victor Maclure, might interest the more boisterous kind of law and medical student with a taste for amateur theatricals, but what it is doing in a theatre that has pretensions to being a theatre is a mystery. I sat out two acts of it because of Miss Baddeley in "The Wild Duck," and because she did not appear till the very

end of the first act. But not even for the unusual beauty of Miss Baddeley's acting technique could I have stood more.

* * *

The founding of the Film Society is, I think, a very interesting and hopeful event. The society proposes to show "films which reach a certain aesthetic standard to a limited membership on Sundays, in the same way that plays are shown by the Phoenix and Stage Societies." If the Film Society can do for the cinema what the Sunday dramatic societies are doing for the theatre, it will achieve a great work. Personally I am all for liberty in the arts as well as in politics, and if the Great Public really want to see "Dear Little Billie" and an infinite series of Silly Billies, by all means let them have them. But there are also people who want to see Pirandello and "The Cherry Orchard" and "Prisoners of War" and Congreve and Webster, and that it is now possible for them to do so in London is largely due to the number of Sunday societies which have sprung up in the wake of the Phoenix and Stage Societies. And you have only to look at the list of plays now being given in the regular theatres to see that the "intelligent" play has spread to them from the Sunday evening performances. The Film Society promises us, among other things, "Nju," "The Stone Rider," and revivals of "Caligari," "The Marriage Circle," and "Greed." The subscription is from one guinea to three guineas for one seat at eight performances, and the first performance will be on October 25th.

* * *

One of the few daily papers which consider literature worth devoting space to, remarks of a certain critic that "he penetrates to the core of his subject when he says that 'Flecker loved that beauty should go beautifully,' and that his life was 'a concentrated effort to appreciate the beauty of the visible and fleeting universe, the shadow of that ultimate beauty which is eternal.'" The notice begins by saying that "Mr. — is a critic in the true tradition." When will this dope scandal cease? Tradition, true or otherwise, is notoriously lacking in this country, but whatever the "true tradition" of a critic may be, it is his job to be a judge of values, to disentangle fact, to compare, and to clear away obstructions, not to try to create a vaguely emotional atmosphere by means of sentences consisting mainly of metaphysical abstractions. That is certainly not to penetrate to the core of his subject. The passage approvingly quoted is a good instance of Mr. Richards's application of "a blind man in a dark room chasing a cat that isn't there." That sort of thing is, no doubt, inevitable, so long as literature ranks with bridge and the loud speaker as one of those blessed inventions that prevent us from thinking. It will be argued that it is the business of literature to delight; perhaps, but that cuts no ice, for it is also the business of muffins.

Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, October 3.—123rd Exhibition of Pictures and Drawings by Modern Artists, at the French Gallery, 120, Pall Mall.

Sunday, October 4.—Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson on "Resurrectionism," at South Place Institute.

Miss Shirland Quin's "That Which Counts," Repertory Players, at the Duke of York's.

Monday, October 5.—"Richard III.," at the Old Vic. Bernard Shaw's "You Never Can Tell," at Regent Theatre.

"Red Russia" and "Morosco," films, at the Polytechnic Cinema.

"Ypres," film, at the Marble Arch Pavilion.

James Cing, Pianoforte Recital, at 3, at Wigmore Hall.

Tuesday, October 6.—Noel Eadie, Song Recital, at 8.15, at Wigmore Hall.

Friday, October 9.—Bernard Shaw's "Candida," at Regent Theatre.

Alexander Carey, Song Recital, at 8.15, at Wigmore Hall.

OMICRON.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

THE LAST CONRAD

WHAT, I suppose, is the last Conrad novel which we shall read has just been published. "Suspense" (Dent, 7s. 6d.) is, like so many posthumous books, uncompleted, but the part which has been completed is so large (running to 300 pages) and seems to have been so carefully written and revised that it is quite possible to enjoy it as a book and judge it as an achievement. The posthumous fragments of great writers have a strong and sentimental attraction for many minds, and with "Suspense" I already seem to notice the not unusual tendency of critics to hail it as the master's masterpiece. It is, of course, easy to say that "Weir of Hermiston" would have been the greatest of Stevenson's books if he had finished it, and one cannot disprove the statement; on the other hand, there is really no reason at all for believing it. The same applies to "Suspense," although, since in this case the completed portion is much larger and there is much more to go on, it must be harder to delude oneself with the belief that the portion which was never written would have been better than "Lord Jim." As it stands, this fragment, though it shows many of Conrad's great merits, cannot stand by the side of "Lord Jim" and the best of his earlier works.

* * *

Mr. Curle, in a short introduction, says that "Conrad regarded 'Suspense' as, in all probability, his final book," and that he had been writing it for a long time. Apparently, it was begun before "The Rover," which "was but an interlude suggested by the longer story." It is a story of the Napoleonic Wars, the period between the first Peace of Paris and Waterloo, when Napoleon was caged in Elba. The period seems to have had a great attraction for Conrad, and he had obviously made a careful study of its history. It is a "historical novel" of the classic type, in which major and minor historical persons move somewhat stiffly among imaginary characters. Thus we have a careful portrait of Count Bubna and Lady William Bentinck at the same evening party with the hero. There is much to be said for this convention. Somehow or other, that Count Bubna, whom I remember so well hovering in Paris when fate was closing in on Napoleon in the eighth and last volume of Sorel's great history, the historically insignificant Bubna gives a certain solidity to that imaginary party to which the imaginary Cosmo goes in "Suspense." And perhaps the story thrills with a little unreal reality when a typical Conradian character, the doctor, tells Cosmo what he heard from Prince Talleyrand through Montrond.

* * *

This semi-real atmosphere of the historical novel may be meretricious and artistically indefensible. It depends for its effect, one imagines, upon the possession of some historical knowledge by the reader, who, for instance, must at least know that Count Bubna did exist. Conrad uses it in this book with considerable skill. One can see how, with its help, he has made his book, in the first place, a very good story. It is an exciting story, less psychologically complicated than many of the later Conrads. Indeed, one is so interested in the question of what is going to happen that one's chief regret when it breaks off short is that one will never know. There are many people who will say that this is a proof of the book's merits. It is a proof of one merit which Conrad undoubtedly possessed, that of the storyteller; but it is still more a proof of the book's defects. Suppose we had

only three or four hundred pages of "Lord Jim." Most readers, it is true, would feel a sense of disappointment when they came to the last page at not knowing what happened, how the story ended. But there would have been a far deeper sense of disappointment, a sense of psychological and artistic incompleteness. I am interested not so much in the "story," in what *happened*, for instance, at the inquiry into the abandonment of the pilgrim ship, as in the working of Lord Jim's mind, set in a world of other minds. In "Lord Jim," the moral and psychological problem informs the book; it *is* the book, and that is why, if the book had remained a posthumous fragment, we should have felt disappointment not only that we did not know what happened, but that we had been left with an incomplete work of art.

* * *

I have no such feeling with regard to "Suspense." When I am left on the last page with the hero, Cosmo Latham, obviously on his way to Elba, I am disappointed because I shall never know what happened to him there. I want to know that, but that is practically all I want to know. What happens inside Cosmo Latham's head or inside the heads of the Countess or of the doctor is of no interest. This may be explained by saying that these characters are unreal; they lack that psychological reality which was so startling in Lord Jim or Falk; but the unreality is a symptom rather than a cause of Conrad's failure. Superficially, "Suspense" has all Conrad's merits. It is constructed with immense skill and care; it is solid; it has the grand air; it is the work of an artist or craftsman who has a passion for his work. The characters are wonderfully worked over, typically Conradian. The sentences march until, every now and again, they break into the well-known rhythm:

"He surrendered to the soft and invincible stillness of air and sea and stars enveloping the active desires and the secret fears of men who have the sombre earth for their stage. At every momentary pause in his long and fantastic adventure, it returned with its splendid charm and glorious serenity, resembling the power of a great and unfathomable love whose tenderness like a sacred spell lays to rest all the vividities and all the violences of passionate desire."

And yet, despite its solidity and seriousness, it leaves one with a strong feeling of emptiness and hollowness. I enjoyed reading it, but, as soon as I had finished and began to think critically of it, to look inside it, I had the feeling which one gets on cracking a fine, shining, new walnut, which has just dropped from the tree, only to find that it has nothing inside it. Most of the later Conrads give one this feeling. They are splendid shells, magnificent façades, admirable forms, but there is no life in them. Perhaps to write a great book two things are required: there must be a central, living idea which all through the writing of the book must be giving off radiant emanations like a piece of radium, and the author must also have in his mind the image of a form or shell which can take and hold and mould and restrain this idea. There are some writers—Mr. Wells is, perhaps, one—who have the radiant emanations, but no form or shell in which to enclose them; Mr. Conrad, in some of his early writings, had both, but, in "Suspense" and others of his later novels, he is in the opposite position to Mr. Wells, he has the form, complete and imposing, but the ideas within it have ceased to radiate, ceased to be alive.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

THE PROBLEMS OF INHERITANCE

Experiments in Genetics. By C. C. HURST. Illustrated. (Cambridge University Press, 50s.)

It was in 1866 that Gregor Mendel, afterwards Abbot of the Königskloster at Brünn, published the results of his work on the crossing of different races of garden peas—work which was epoch-making in the strictest sense of the word. Extraordinarily enough, however, the epoch which Mendel made did not begin till thirty-four years later, long after the Abbot's death. During all that time his discovery lay buried in the transactions of the local scientific society, till in 1900 it was simultaneously found by students of heredity in four different countries (Bateson in England, Correns in Germany, De Vries in Holland, and Tschermak in Austria)—surely as striking a romance as the history of science records. The time was fully ripe. The nineteenth century, the second half of which had seen the foundation of Darwinism and its conquest of the field of biology, was on the point of closing. Enormously as Darwinism had vitalized the knowledge of living beings and stimulated research in every direction, its influence on fresh investigation was rapidly waning. Evolution was accepted as a fact by everyone who counted, but Darwin's idea of the way in which the actual species of plants and animals had come into existence was not, eventually, found satisfactory, especially by those who knew species best, since the actual characters which separated them were often unconnected with the life-preserving function postulated by the theory of natural selection. Weismann had successfully questioned the supposed evidence for the inheritance of characters acquired by the individual during its lifetime, but of the detailed working of heredity and variation biologists knew practically nothing.

On this last problem Mendel's work threw a brilliant light, and led to the rapid development of a new branch of biology (christened "Genetics" by Bateson in 1906), which has flourished exceedingly during the last twenty-five years and forms one of the pillars of modern biology. The essence of Mendel's discovery, as extended by recent work, but omitting complications, is that the complex qualities of organisms can be resolved into elementary "unit characters," the "factors" for which are separately inherited. Each germ cell ("gamete"), i.e., the male or the female reproductive cell, produced by an individual bears a series of germ representatives ("genes") of these characters or factors. We do not yet know what genes really are, though there is a good deal of probability that many of them, at least, are definite chemical substances. We do not know how they originate or whether they can change. When we do know these things we shall have practically solved the problem of organic evolution. But what Mendel and his followers have established is that the *single gamete* never bears *unlike* representatives of the same character. This is called the doctrine of "genetic purity," and is of the first importance. It means that if, for instance, in a given kind of plant there is a single "factor" for flower colour and the flowers are blue or yellow, the gamete will bear either the blue factor (gene) or the yellow one, not both. Now if in the process of fertilization (union of gametes) *like* genes meet, for instance, blue and blue, or yellow and yellow, the offspring will naturally be blue, or yellow, correspondingly, and can produce nothing but "blue" and "yellow" gametes, respectively. In other words, the races will be perfectly pure. If, on the other hand, the two genes which meet at fertilization are *unlike*, it is usually the case that one of them is "dominant" over the other, which means that the offspring show only the character of the one which is dominant; for instance, if blue is dominant a blue-yellow mating will give rise to offspring which are all blue. But these offspring, unlike those which are produced by the mating of like genes, themselves carry *both* colours in their gametes (since they received both from their parents), the genes *segregating* in production of the germ cells, so that approximately half the gametes will carry the one colour and the other half the other. If now such individuals are mated together, the chance meetings of the gametes will clearly give the result that half the "blue" gametes will mate with blue and the other half with yellow, and so with

the "yellow" gametes. The result will be that of the whole number of offspring produced one-quarter will be pure blue, one quarter pure yellow, while the remaining half will be "blue-yellow." But the individuals produced by the mating of blue and yellow gametes will, by the law of dominance, be blue, so that three-quarters of the whole brood will be blue, and only one-quarter yellow. But of these blue individuals only one-third (representing the one-quarter of the whole which are pure blue matings) will be of pure blue heredity, producing only pure blue gametes, while the other two-thirds (the one half of the whole brood which arise from blue-yellow matings) will carry both genes. Thus individuals which are indistinguishable to look at may be of distinct genetic constitution, and will produce quite different offspring. With certain modifications and complications (such as the facts that "dominance" is not always complete, the offspring of the first cross being intermediate in character between the parents; that the interaction of two genes may produce a character which neither can produce alone, and that the genes representing some characters may become linked with, and thus be inherited together with, those representing other characters) these laws—of gametic purity, of dominance, and of segregation—have been found to hold for an immense number of the heritable characters of most various kinds of animals and plants, and they form the secure foundation of our modern knowledge of heredity and variation. One of the most interesting results is that sex itself obeys the Mendelian laws.

Mr. Hurst has been one of the most prominent and assiduous British students of Genetics ever since the rediscovery of Mendel's work. His breeding experiments, indeed, began some years before 1900, and he was one of the first to follow Bateson in instituting experiments on the new lines. At his home in the village of Burbage, in Leicestershire, he has instituted and carried through many series of experiments with various kinds of plants and animals, though these were very seriously interrupted by the war, which necessitated Mr. Hurst's absence on military service, and led to the sacrifice of most of his valuable experimental material. The present rather sumptuous volume, produced in the excellent manner characteristic of the Cambridge Press, contains the author's collected papers, thirty-eight in number, reprinted from various periodicals; and it represents an imposing body of work.

Of Mr. Hurst's contributions, some of the most interesting to the general reader are those dealing with eye-colour in man (pp. 272, 287, 391). Human eye-colour depends mainly on the colour of the iris, which in its turn is caused by the presence of one or two layers of pigment. First there is the blue colour of the deeper layers, which is present in all eyes, except those of some albinos, and which, when present alone, gives blue or grey eyes; secondly, there is in many eyes a more superficial layer of brown pigment, which modifies or masks, more or less completely, the deeper-lying blue, giving rise to black, brown, or green eyes, or some modification of these colours: or, where the brown pigment is not uniformly distributed, to ringed or spotted eye-colour. Omitting these last cases for the sake of simplicity, we find that eyes possessing the brown pigment (called by Mr. Hurst "Duplex" eyes) behave as dominants to those without it ("Simplex" eyes). This conclusion the author established by the examination of 1,341 individuals belonging to 215 families. The practical result is that in families in which both parents have pure blue eyes it is impossible for any of the children to have eyes of any other colour, and this is true *whatever their remoter ancestry may have been*. On the other hand, brown-eyed parents may have both brown- and blue-eyed children, for they *may* carry the pure blue type of eye-colour gene owing to the fact that the brown pigment is "dominant." Without a knowledge of the eye-colour of the grandparents it is impossible to know whether they do or not. If, however, all four grandparents also had duplex eyes, together with all their offspring, and the families were sufficiently large (to allow for the probable error in the working of chance mating of the gametes), then we are dealing with a pure duplex race, in which all the *gametes* have the representative of the brown pigment, and no pure blue-eyed offspring can be produced. It is interesting to note that substantially the same results were arrived at independently at about the same time by Dr. and Mrs. Davenport in America.

Mr. Hurst's other contributions cover a very wide range, from orchids to horses (the relation of "hunters" to thoroughbreds), and from rabbits to roses. In his last contribution he studies the structural features of the germ cell nuclei (which, it is generally agreed, carry the hereditary factors) in wild roses, and throws considerable light, as regards this genus of plants, on the great problem of the origin and distribution of species.

Mr. Hurst is, indeed, an excellent specimen of that class of non-professional worker, to which English science owes so much, who devotes his private means, his time, and his brains to the disinterested pursuit of scientific research.

A. G. TANSLEY.

PROUST IN ENGLISH

The Guermantes Way. By MARCEL PROUST. Translated by C. K. SCOTT MONCRIEFF. 2 vols. (Chatto & Windus. 15s.)

THESE are volumes five and six of Mr. Scott Moncrieff's remarkable translation of "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu." They show no inferiority to the volumes which have already appeared; they are on the whole, indeed, more steadily excellent. To what quality Mr. Scott Moncrieff owes his pre-eminence as a translator it is difficult to say. He has all the more obvious virtues of the translator: plasticity and adaptableness of mind; that secondary inventive faculty which can discover a great variety of ways in which one thing may be said (a power hardly ever possessed by the creative artist, and one which, if it were, would probably be inimical to him); the ability to fall into a given style as if one were born to it; a turn for impersonation not unlike that of an actor. All these qualities Mr. Scott Moncrieff possesses; but what gives his work its peculiar excellence is an unusual penetration and intimacy of intuition, a discriminative sympathy such as is necessary, for example, in literary criticism, though it is seldom found there. One feels that Mr. Scott Moncrieff might have been an excellent critic, if he had not chosen to be an excellent translator.

"The Guermantes Way" gives one a better idea than either "Swann's Way" or "Within a Budding Grove" of Proust's variety, range, profundity—of what the less timorous critics of other ages might have called his universality. It is this universality which impresses us most in reading him; he is the one writer of our age who has given us a picture of human life on a full and spacious scale; who, with the lack of embarrassment which reveals a master, has drawn all kinds of people, ordinary and abnormal, servants, the middle class, the intelligentsia, the various aristocracies; and who in doing this has made us understand how a great writer speaks, feels, thinks, and sees the world. He has the opulence, the wastefulness, which only in writers of a certain rank is supportable, because only in them is it unforced and natural. He speaks with authority as those do who know that their work is incontestable, even if a part here or a part there may justly be condemned on aesthetic grounds. This work is less a work of art, to adopt Arnold's verdict on "Anna Karenina," than a slice of life. It has little arrangement in the ordinary sense; comedy, tragedy, psychological generalization appear at that point in the story when the author's mind happens to be interested in them, not at the point where they will have the maximum effect; and it is the duration of the attention of this mind which determines their length, the intensity of that attention which makes them exciting and dramatic. And how magnificent are the comedy, the tragedy, the psychology! What a feat of economy is the first introduction of M. de Charlus in "Within a Budding Grove"; what a triumph of minute and sustained portrayal is the dinner party at the Duchess de Guermantes'; what a *tour de force* of pure imaginative speculation the description in the first of the present two volumes of the difference which deafness makes to our visual apprehension of things: "objects moved without sound seemed also to be moved without cause; deprived of all resonant quality, they show a spontaneous activity, seem to be alive"—and so on for several pages, until we seem to be initiated into the mystery of sound. It is this variety and profundity of apprehension which makes Proust a great writer. His meticulousness of observation is

probably unique in literature, but it is always the reflection of an immense breadth of interest. In power of psychological generalization he reminds us of the French aphorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; but he possesses also a dramatic power of a very high order. And, apart from these more traditional qualities, his intuitions of obscure states and changes of the soul are so subtle, so minute, so exact, and so nearly beyond what we are accustomed to think intuition can achieve, that, not knowing how they came to the mind, we are astonished by them as by something occult.

In their judgment of contemporaries most ages seem to be content with a writer who possesses one remarkable quality; and he who brings his single talent to perfection will be regarded as a great writer. But sometimes there bursts suddenly into this normal and orderly atmosphere a writer who has not merely one great quality, but half-a-dozen; a writer who seems to help himself to a faculty whenever he needs it, and who continues to astonish everybody because he says, feels, thinks, sees, understands, and imagines so much more than anybody else. Proust is a writer of this kind. He is not the equal of the greatest masters of the novel, of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, but he is of the same order; he has the same apparent inexhaustibility of endowment. And he has also, like them, a certain uniqueness of utterance which, as it were, justifies itself, which we accept, and which we do not wish to be better or other than it is.

EDWIN MUIR.

SIR EDMUND GOSSE, C.B.

Silhouettes. By Sir EDMUND GOSSE. (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.) **Considerations on Edmund Gosse.** By PATRICK BRAYBROOKE. (Drane. 7s. 6d.)

THAT such a book as this of Mr. Braybrooke's should have been published without Sir Edmund Gosse's approval would seem improbable were it not inconceivable that it should have been published with. Frankly, it is unworthy of its subject; being a mere hash-up in wretched English of what Sir Edmund has said in excellent, seasoned with a few trite and ill-expressed reflections of the author's own. Here is a sample:—

"There have, of course, been critics who have attributed the controversy between Gray and Walpole to being entirely the fault of the poet, but this appears to be incorrect, and Gosse's attitude that Walpole was the offender is the most reasonable view of this famous literary storm in a large and enduring teacup."

As this is above rather than below Mr. Braybrooke's average, we suppose Sir Edmund will not be unduly puffed up. Nor is the encomiast's subtler appreciation of a kind to give much pleasure:—

"It is instructive to note that at the age of thirty, Gray was absolutely unknown, the only thing he had published being quite 'stillborn,' as Gosse so admirably puts it."

We think Gosse has put things better than that.

It is rather unlucky that Mr. Braybrooke should have led off with a résumé of the master's views on Swinburne, for the essay serves no purpose but to remind us—unintentionally, of course—of a smart counter-rap recently administered to the august knuckles by one of the most brilliant of our younger critics. That critic, if we remember right, resented Sir Edmund's attitude to the last of the great English lyrists. He spoke for a generation which is not best pleased with the *Sainte-Beuve* of the English Sabbath, which discovers in his criticism a tendency to prudery and patronage, a lack of sympathy with new ideas and new ways of expressing them, which accuses him of insensibility in fact. Nevertheless, this generation, because Sir Edmund is much too powerful to be ignored, reads and grumbles. The next, it is to be feared, may not give itself the chance of being vexed. That will be a pity, for Sir Edmund can both please and instruct. At the same time it must be allowed that he has written for his own age, not theirs; and that to-day—though to be sure Mr. Braybrooke has no air of maturity—his most enthusiastic admirers are probably people who are glad to hear the opinions and sentiments with which they have been familiar these forty years restated admirably.

If the name of Edmund Gosse live at all, it will live, we surmise, by the book he published anonymously, "Father and Son." That, however, is not the opinion of the encomiast, who admires especially his critical biographies and counts him sure of immortality:—

"I have, then, not the slightest hesitation in prophesying immortality for Gosse with his literary critiques of such men as Swinburne, Gray, Patmore, Ibsen, and Congreve. To deny Gosse permanence with such volumes would be as futile as denying Napoleon or Hannibal immortality in the realms of military art. By these delightful and important studies, Gosse will live long after the tombstone over his grave has lost its new look."

As, however, in other places, Mr. Braybrooke puts Sir Edmund on a level with Lord Morley, to whom he likens him, it seems possible that his estimate of the talents of Napoleon and Hannibal is different from ours.

In a sense, Sir Edmund Gosse has already put on immortality, since his merits have been officially recognized. As a rule, we disapprove of artists accepting honours. The State very properly rewards those who have served it well; but to suggest that an artist works for the good of the State, or the benefit of mankind, or for any purpose other than that of expressing a personal conviction, is to insult him. He is the supreme individualist. A thorough artist alone on the planet would still continue to create. Wherefore, though the State does well in rewarding with knighthoods soldiers, sailors, and politicians, Tennyson made himself ridiculous by accepting a peerage. What makes the case of Sir Edmund Gosse different is that in the opinion of some well placed to judge of his whole achievement he was even more admirable as a civil servant than as a writer. Which notwithstanding, the general public will almost certainly believe that Edmund Gosse was honoured with a title, not so much for his services to the Board of Trade as for those rendered to English literature by his edition of Gray's letters.

ROBERT JORDAN.

MECHANICAL PROGRESS

Along the Road. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d.)

It is time that the work of Aldous Huxley was divided into two classes, as that of Arnold Bennett has been for many years. No one confounds such writings as "How to make the Best of Life" with a great work of art such as "Riceman Steps." And those who travel with Mr. Huxley "Along the Road" in his ten horse-power Citroën, through Europe and a score of essays, will find few hints of the poet who wrote "Leda," and none of the creator of Gumbri's patent small-clothes. Naturally, there are felicities of phrase, as when he speaks of the "thin, sharp, arrowy cry of the swallow," and there are also many beautiful descriptive passages of scenery, and particularly of the Palio at Siena. The great bulk of these essays should, however, have been printed in a different form, with a different binding, suitable for a gift-book or a school prize.

"Along the Road" will appeal to a serious public, to the tens of thousands who go to lectures, listen to sermons, are always interested to hear what distinguished people say.

The subjects Mr. Huxley chooses, it is true, are usually interesting; the sentiments and the moral reflections are admirable; all is intelligent and extremely just; every point is made plainly, and repeated so that it cannot be misunderstood . . . nothing, in fact, could be better. Yet it is not a book for the admirers of the novels. A couple of quotations should make this plain:—

"It may be objected that the small-car owner is not alone in envying. The wander-birds doing their four miles an hour, sweating, up the dusty hill, must envy indiscriminately both the ten and the forty horse-power man. True, some of them probably do. But it must not be forgotten that there are pedestrians who walk because they genuinely prefer walking to being effortlessly carried along in a machine. In my youth I used to try to pretend that I preferred walking to other means of locomotion. But I soon found that it was not true. For a little time I was one of those hypocrites of country heartiness (and they are quite numerous) who tramp and drink ale in little inns,

because it is the right thing to do. In the end, however, I frankly admitted to myself, and to other people, that I was not one of nature's walkers, that I did not like hearty exercise and discomfort, and that I did not mean to pretend any longer that I did. But I still have the greatest respect for those who do, and I consider that they are probably a superior type of humanity to the idle and comfort-loving breed predominant at the present time. One of the greatest charms of mechanical progress is that it allows us to do everything quickly, easily, and comfortably. This is very agreeable; but I doubt whether it is, morally speaking, very healthy. It is not even very healthy for the body."

"Mystery is delightful and exciting; but it is foolish to admire it too highly. A thing is mysterious merely because it is unknown. There will always be mysteries because there will always be unknown and unknowable things. But it is best to know what is knowable. There is no credit about not knowing what can be known. Some literary men, for example, positively pride themselves on their ignorance of science; they are fools, and arrogant at that."

Such are Mr. Huxley's thoughts, and there are pages and pages of them. They exhale an almost awful security. . . . You are suddenly back in the headmaster's study . . . for a friendly interview—not for corporal punishment—but the voice goes on and on while, with your eyes on the carpet, you say to yourself: "If that is what the world is going to be like, I for one shall go and live among the Esquimaux."

But how strange! How extraordinary! The explanation is that what is precious in Mr. Huxley is his imagination. Once he has blown up his behind with airy conceits, and muffled his chin in Bluebeard's own beard, away he flies out of the headmaster's window, as naughty as a street arab, and as amusing as not one of the present solemn generation knows how to be. Then he is indeed a great writer, a true artist, a rare and wonderful poet, half Hamlet, half buffoon. But without his imaginative afflatus, when there is a puncture in the bags, he becomes as boring as a schoolmaster talking about life may seem to a small boy.

MEDIÆVAL FRANCE

Life in Mediæval France. By JOAN EVANS, B. Litt. (Oxford University Press. 15s.)

THE saying that every man has two countries, his own and France, was never more true than in the middle ages. "France, mère des armes, des arts et des lois," as Ronsard was later to hail her, was the true centre of European civilization, although the two great institutions in which the middle ages embodied its vision of politics and religion, the Empire and the Papacy, were focused in Germany and in Rome. French vernacular literature was the first to rise like a phoenix from the ashes of Latin, spreading its two great wings, the *langue d'oïl* and the *langue d'oc*. French houses and orders, Cluny, Cîteaux, Clairvaux, Prémontré, recreated and gave new forms to monasticism; French genius worked out feudalism in all its logic, and chivalry in all its ideal. Frenchmen so stamped themselves upon the crusading movement—"gesta dei per Francos"—that the Saracens knew all Crusaders as Franks. All that was fine in mediæval kingship was summed up in a French king, Saint Louis, and a French university became the intellectual centre of the Western world. Finally it was France which, first among the nations, aroused a conscious national pride in a world of class relationships, for the sense of *la patrie* is manifest as early as the "Chanson de Roland," with its cry of "dulce France."

Yet French civilization, though a unity, was, as Miss Evans shows in an excellent introductory chapter, compact of four interwoven strands. From Provence it drew a subtlety and poetry half Italian and half of the East; from Normandy (true heir of Rome, though physically farthest removed from her) an "enlightened common sense," manifesting itself in a genius for law and for administration and in that grand architecture which is the artistic expression of the same qualities, manifesting itself too in a love of travel and of adventure, outlets for the high spirits which law and administration could not entirely curb. From Burgundy, lying across the trade routes by road and by river, home of great monasteries and great fairs, both commerce and religion received an impetus. Lastly, in the

Île de France, heart of the realm and a centre of the royal domain, the monarchy had its seat and slowly extended its work of unification and centralization, while Paris, at once a capital and a university, bred lawyers and clergy, who were its twin supports against feudalism and gave it its philosophical justification. Now one strain, now the other is uppermost in French history, but the many-sided, brilliant, and most contagious civilization, which was the product of them all, developed without a break, save for the temporary disaster of the Hundred Years' War.

Miss Evans's purpose is to present the general reader with a picture of mediæval life through the medium of France. Her concern, as she says, "is with neither the political nor the literary history of France, but with the elements of her mediæval civilization." From the admirable introductory chapter already referred to, she passes to discuss in turn feudal society, town life, monastic life, pilgrimage and crusade, learning, education, work and religion, ending with a general chapter on the end of the middle ages, in which she analyzes the results of the Hundred Years' War and the slow dissolution of the characteristically mediæval civilization, to give place to a new world in which France was still the leader. To make an *œuvre de vulgarisation* is by no means an easy task. Too many books addressed to the general reader lack the necessary foundation of scholarship, and others yield to the temptation to string together that superficial gossip about daily life which often passes for social history. Miss Evans deserves congratulation for the competence with which she has carried out her task. Her book is solidly constructed, illustrated throughout by quotation from a wide range of contemporary literature, and extremely readable. No one could read it without taking away with him a definite and vivid picture of how men lived and thought and had their being in the middle ages.

How different it all is from our own age—and how extraordinarily alike! Hear Guibert de Nogert on the modern young woman (of the early twelfth century):—

"Alas, how miserably . . . maidenly modesty and honour have fallen off, and the mothers' guardianship hath decayed both in appearance and in fact, so that in all their behaviour nothing can be noted but unseemly mirth, wherein are no sounds but of jest, with winking eyes, and babbling tongues and wanton gait, and most ridiculous manners. The quality of their garments is so unlike to that frugality of the past, that in the widening of their sleeves, the tightening of their bodices, their shoes of cordovan morocco with twisted beaks—nay, in their whole person, we see how shame is cast aside. Each thinketh to have touched the lowest step of misery if she lack the regard of lovers and measureth her glory of nobility or courtliness by the ampler number of such suitors. . . . Thus and in such-like ways is our modern age corrupted."

Here, again, is a mediæval chestnut which still flourishes: "The preacher tells the story of the old customer who asked to have his sausages cheaper as he had dealt with the one butcher for seven years. 'Seven years!' cried the charcutier, 'and you're still alive!'" And here is a touch of nature to make the centuries kin: Peter, Precentor of Notre Dame de Paris about 1190, speaking of the propensity of the canons to "cut" the services, explains that where the chapter deducts a certain sum for non-attendance, you may see them running up at the last moment, "like old women after a greased pig, some bent forward, others leaping over the bar to enter, others pressing in disorderly fashion through the open door."

The Oxford University Press is to be highly commended for the excellent production of this book, which is really cheap at the price. Its value is enhanced by forty-eight full-page illustrations and two maps; the plates are beautiful and comprise photographs of castles, cottages, and cathedrals, details of sculpture and architecture, and reproductions from manuscripts; they are almost a history of French civilization in themselves.

EILEEN POWER.

HUMAN NATURE

Dead Letters. By MAURICE BARING. (Heinemann. 6s.) This book, one of the most delightful of all Mr. Baring's works, originally appeared in 1910. Many readers, however, who are already familiar with it will be glad to have it in the new "uniform" edition, and this attractive reprint

should be the means of introducing the volume to a wider circle. In a whimsical preface, Mr. Baring says that he has suffered both from the credulity and the scepticism of his readers, some of whom have asked him to give them from his secret store "further details with regard to Lady Macbeth's housekeeping, Lord Bacon's business affairs, and the table talk of the Emperor Claudius," while others have demanded to be supplied with "the historical evidence for Guinevere's extravagance in dress." To all his critics Mr. Baring replies that these epistles, "collected from the Dead Letter Office of the World," are not meant to be historical studies or even aids to the understanding of history:—

"The word 'research' is not even remotely applicable here, for in my case it means the hazy memories of a distant education indolently received, a few hurried references to Smith's 'Classical Dictionary,' a map of Rome which is in the London Library, and Bouillet's 'Biographie Universelle.' So that if you tell me that my account of the Carthaginian fleet is full of inaccuracies, or that the psychology of my Lesbians conflicts with the historical evidence, I shall be constrained to answer that I do not care."

But, if Mr. Baring's interpretation of history may scandalize the pedant and mislead the ignorant, those who possess the real historic sense will find many grains of truth amid his chaff. His humour is not mere fun, but is of that quiet and delicate kind that springs only from a deeply sensitive and reflective temperament, and is inseparable from a gentle melancholy. It was unnecessary for Mr. Baring to protest that his levity is not the familiarity which breeds contempt, but that which is "begotten of awe"—that his laughter is that of "the True Believer" and not "the scoff of the Infidel." It is, after all, only a true believer who could endow with common flesh and blood the famous characters of ancient and modern times who too often appear as gods—or else as mere puppets—in the pages of formal history. There may often be a ridiculous note in these letters, in which Helen of Troy, Diogenes, King Arthur, Goneril and Cordelia, Lord Bacon and his "literary agent," Sir Walter Raleigh, and many others, write, in twentieth-century colloquial English, about the homely and intimate affairs of daily life. But it is the absurdity, akin to the highest wisdom, of one who understands human nature, and who knows that, through all the changes of fashion and custom, it remains essentially the same from age to age.

KNOW THYSELF

The Galton System of Mind Training. (Galton Institute, 90, Gt. Russell Street, W.C. Twelve Lessons. £5 5s.)

THERE must be a very large number of people who are conscious that our ordinary system of education is seriously deficient in "mind training," and that, with a little scientific management, they could make much better use than they do of the mental gifts with which fate has provided them. That this is the case is shown by the enormous response to offers to train the mind or memory and by the demand for books which profess to reveal the secret of success in business or professions. This response and this demand show a sound instinct in the ordinary person, and they are at the same time a condemnation of our educational systems. Psychology is one of the departments of science which has made immense advance in the last fifty years, both theoretically and experimentally; by the application of its discoveries much could be done in the way of mind training, but in fact the ordinary boy or girl still leaves school having "done their lessons" as did their fathers and grandfathers, but with little or no mind training.

The Galton Institute, Ltd., offers to supply this need for training by a correspondence course of twelve lessons. We have examined the twelve golden little booklets in which the lessons are contained, and very interesting we have found them. The idea that a person who has never trained or organized, let us say, his memory can be given some patent nostrum or abracadabra which will immediately make him able to remember everything is of course nonsense, and the Galton Institute does not pretend to be able to whisper any secret which will instantly convert a bad memory into a good one. The basis of mind training in this sense is self-knowledge; for the pupil must first learn to "know himself," and then proceed to the task of learning how to

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acquire good instead of bad mental habits. There is no doubt that the ordinary man who knows little or nothing about psychology, if he studies these little books, will acquire a considerable amount of useful knowledge about the way in which his mind works; and if he were then to go on to carry out, with patience and persistence, the exercises and instructions recommended to him, he would acquire some extremely useful mental habits.

The Galton Institute system is based upon an eclectic use of the discoveries and theories of many different schools of modern psychology. That we consider to be eminently desirable. For instance, many of the facts established by experimental psychologists can be used by ordinary persons in training themselves to acquire good or useful mental habits, but at the same time the facts established with regard to auto-suggestion, let us say, may be of great practical importance in everyday life. And mind training need not, as indeed these little books show, be confined to mental habits which are useful in business or profession; the psychologist may be able not only to help you to become an efficient typist, but also to substitute a feeling of happiness for one of depression or of interest for boredom. It is, in fact, the scientific psychologist to whom we must now look for efficient performance of much of the work which used to be done by the priest and the schoolmaster.

REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES

In the "Contemporary Review," Mr. J. A. Hobson writes "The Reformation of Politics," in effect a criticism and appreciation of Professor Laski's "Grammar of Politics." In the same paper "A Member of the Last Parliament" writes on "The Liberal Party: What Sort of Future?" and Mr. Law has a paper called "Ireland: After the Storm." "We are," he writes, "neither particularly prosperous nor particularly proud of ourselves these days. We begin to find that English rule, however rightly abolished, was not, after all, the root of all evil, nor Irishmen invariably endowed with a double dose of primeval wisdom. We suspect that we have a deal of hard work before us if we are to make Ireland what we all desire; though we naturally prefer that some class to which we do not happen to belong—politicians or priests, or farmers or business men, or artizans or labourers—shall be the first to set a good example. . . . We are making many experiments and are bound to make many mistakes. But I am sure we shall win through." Other articles bearing on Home or Imperial Affairs are: in the "Fortnightly," "Democracy and Syndicalism," by Sir J. A. R. Marriott; in the "Nineteenth Century," "Britain and the Dominions," by the Hon. A. S. Malcolm, member of the Legislative Council of New Zealand, "A Policy of Imperial Migration," by Sir John Ross, and "Chaos in Industry," by Mr. William Sanderson.

Comments are meagre, so far, on the Geneva meeting. Mr. Hugh Spender writes a general account of the proceedings in the "Fortnightly." The "Review of Reviews" publishes, under the title "A Scheme for World Reorganization," a Memorial submitted, on behalf of the Pan-Europe Movement, to the League of Nations by Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi. The same paper has also "A Contribution to the Problem of European Security," a statement of the French point of view by "a highly qualified official," who prefers to be known as "Gallicus." Mr. George Glasgow, in the "Contemporary Review," writes very interestingly on the meeting of Mr. Churchill and M. Caillaux. Of M. Caillaux he says, "He had, at any rate, good reason to expect that Great Britain, who lost the Great War, would adopt a more chastened attitude than the United States, who won it; for the victor collects, and the vanquished pays tribute; and the vanquished are easier game. M. Caillaux had already hinted during the short time he had held office that the payment of debts was among his aspirations, and by repute he is enough of a financier to know that a country can afford to pay debts more than it can afford not to pay them." Sir Thomas Barclay writes on "Joseph Caillaux, the Man and his Policy," in the "Fortnightly." There is an article on Morocco by Sir Charles Hobhouse in the "Contemporary Review," and on the "French in Syria" by Mr. H. Charles

Woods in the "Fortnightly," while Lord Raglan and Mr. Chardin discuss Iraq and Mosul in the "English Review."

MM. Pierre Arminjon and Pierre Crabitès have written an interesting article on Al Azhar University for the "Nineteenth Century." This institution, established at Cairo as a Moslem House of Prayer in 970, is "not so much a Muhammadan foundation . . . as it is a product of the twelfth or of the thirteenth century of the Christian era. . . . It is as out of place . . . to-day as would be the presence at Westminster of a twelfth-century school of old London—if such a body had been kept alive by artificial means, and maintained exactly as it was one hundred years before Edward I. was born."

Four articles, written from widely differing points of view, testify this month to the growing interest of the general public in matters of health. Mr. Llewellyn Williams writes in the "Fortnightly Review" on the work of Sir Herbert Barker. The "Nineteenth Century" has two articles, one extolling, the other condemning, the tenets of the Christian Scientists, by Mr. Charles Tennant and the Rev. C. H. Prichard respectively. Dr. Herbert Snow contributes to the "Contemporary Review" a paper on "The Fallacies of Current Cancer-Research." The "Nineteenth Century" prints also an interesting article by Dr. G. D. Hindley on "Aseptic Surgery in the Fourteenth Century."

"The Mask," that most individual and admirably pugnacious quarterly of the Art of the Theatre, appears as usual with its first pages printed in large type, and its last in type so small that all the wit is needed to make the reading not a labour. This quarter there is an interesting symposium on a design by San Gallo: even to one without the necessary scholarship to form any opinion on the design the answers from Italian, French, and English architects and scholars are sufficiently entertaining. The "Nineteenth Century" has an article by Mr. Washburn on "Sophistication," with illustrations from "The Green Hat" and Mr. Ford's "Some Do Not"; and Mr. John Palmer in the same paper, under the title "Antic Literature," says some clever things.

The "Bermondsey Book" has an article by Mr. Osbert Burdett on "The Writings of Frank Harris," and a paper on "Nationality and Research" by Mr. J. B. S. Haldane. The "Cornhill Magazine" prints a ghost story by Mr. Claude Benson, called "The Horror of Darkness," and Lieut.-Col. Casserby has an archaeological romance called "The First Scot."

The "Adelphi" continues to mingle theology, represented this time by an essay by Mr. Murry called "From Man to God," with a something, illustrated by "Women Too Proud," a poem by Mr. Geoffrey Wells, and "As It Was" by H. T., which, whatever it is, is not religion.

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ALFRED HOWARTH,
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September 28th, 1925.

Town Clerk.

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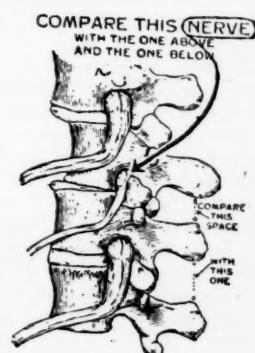
It is widely recognised that Spinal Curvatures are the cause of many diseases of the respiratory, circulatory, nervous and digestive systems. It is not so generally recognised that slight, unnoticed malplacements of the Spinal Bones are also the root cause of a great variety of ailments.

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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

CONVERSION LOAN—GILT-EDGED MARKET—RUBBER—AUSTIN MOTORS.

THE new issue of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Conversion Loan has been a bare success. It is customary to hear City editors, as each new issue of Conversion Loan is made, chorus in the manner of the prophets: "Now is the accepted time: never will you have such another; for the next issue of Conversion Loan cannot be so favourable. Interest rates will fall. Now you can make sure of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. till 1961 or after." We doubt whether the readers of City columns will find these prophetic warnings so moving as they were in April when the second issue by tender of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Conversion was made, or in January when the first was made. It may have occurred to some that if the Treasury authorities shared the views of the City editors they would not be making a new issue of Conversion Loan on such terms at all. If the Treasury believes that interest rates will fall, it certainly would find it cheaper (as the *Times* suggested) to pay $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for ten years by selling 4 per cent. ten-year Treasury Bonds at 94, and at their maturity to fund them into Conversion Loan upon a 4 per cent. basis, than to fund now permanently on a $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. basis. It is disconcerting to find that the Treasury appears to doubt the patriotic view so far as to make each issue of Conversion Loan rather more, instead of less, tempting than the last. In January, when no limit was fixed to the issue, the minimum price for tenders was fixed at $77\frac{1}{2}$, which, including three months' interest, worked out at about £76 16s. net. The amount then applied for was £68,060,000, and the average price realized was £77 10s. 11.58d. In April last, the minimum price was $76\frac{3}{4}$, and £30,000,000 was the issue for sale. £83,610,000 was applied for, and the average price realized was £76 16s. 11.82d. In this last issue, the minimum price for tender was $76\frac{1}{4}$, and seeing that tenders at £76 5s. 6d. received 97 per cent. of the amounts applied for, it would seem that the Treasury was fortunate in receiving an average price of £76 6s. 0.402d. The day before this last issue, the price of Conversion Loan was £76 17s. 6d. The fixing of the minimum price at some 12s. 6d. below the market price suggests that the Treasury credits the financial houses with more critical sense than it does the financial editors. Applications were for only £51,210,000.

* * *

The trouble is that while interest rates may fall in the next ten years, the immediate probability is that they will rise in the next ten weeks. The sterling-dollar exchange on Monday fell to 4.84 7-32, which is below the point at which it pays to remit gold to New York. The weakness in the exchange is attributed to nothing more than the seasonal demand for dollars, and the money market believes that we shall scrape through without losing a great deal of gold. But the atmosphere was not favourable for the new Conversion issue. It seems clear that the Treasury authorities were moved to choose the present time for funding a little more of the floating debt through more compelling reasons than the desire to be financially sound and orthodox, or the temptation to take advantage of a period of cheap money. It is true that the floating debt was increased last month by the payment of £4,555,239 National War Bonds, but that trifles cannot have affected greatly the Treasury decision, nor is it likely that the new issue is a step towards providing for the two large maturities of 5 per cent. Treasury "D" Bonds and 5 per cent. National War Bonds in 1927. It would seem that the Treasury is really apprehensive of a budgetary deficit. An ugly rise in the floating debt, following upon the unforeseen expenditure upon the coal subsidy, might cause such an alarm as would upset the present Government, not to mention the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The immediate effect of the Conversion issue was to depress the gilt-edged market. The table following gives Wednesday's opening prices, together with the appropriate yields:—

	Price Sept. 30.	Flat Yield. £ s. d.	Net Yield before tax. £ s. d.	Net Yield after tax. £ s. d.
3½% Conversion Loan (1961 or after)				
4% Victory Bonds (1976) large ...	76½	4 11 10	4 11 9	3 13 5
5½% War Loan (1923-47) ...	92½	4 6 3	4 8 6	3 11 5
5% War Loan (1923-47) 102 1-16	4 18 0	4 15 6	3 15 8	
4½% Conversion Loan (1940-44) ...	96½	4 13 2	4 16 11	3 18 2
5% National War Bonds (1927) ...	105½	4 14 7	4 7 8	3 8 10
4½% National War Bonds (1927) ...	99½	4 0 1	—	4 1 3
5½% Treasury Bonds A & B (1929) ...	102½	5 7 4	4 14 4	3 13 0
5½% Treasury Bonds C (1930) ...	102 5-16	5 7 6	4 19 0	3 18 6

* * *

We began calling the attention of readers of *THE NATION* to the changed outlook for the rubber industry at the beginning of this year. The following table will show the price at which certain rubber shares stood on Monday of this week, as compared with the prices at which we recommended them:—

	Prices. June 6.	Middle prices. June 28.	App. Cap. Sept. 28.	Apprec. %
Sungei Buaya £1 ...	39/-	52/-	... 33	
Central Sumatra 2/- ...	2/2	3/5	... 58	
Bah Lias £1 ...	40/-	60/-	... 50	
Victoria Malaya 6d. ...	1 1/3	1/11	... 46	
Langen Java £1 ...	32/-	51/3	... 60	
Sungei Kari £1 ...	23/6	42/6	... 80	
Sungei Batu £1 ...	25/-	43/6	... 75	
Toerangie £1 ...	33/3	55/-	... 65	
Selaba £1 ...	27/6	42/-	... 56	
		June 27.		
Sungei Kruit 2/- ...	3/6	7/2	... 105	
Kombok 2/- ...	3/2	4/5	... 39	
Grand Central ...	32/6	40/-	... 26	

* * *

It will be seen that an investment of £500 each in these companies at the dates we recommended them, making £6,000 in all, would now be valued in the market at about £9,350. We do not suppose that any reader of *THE NATION* made that investment, but if one did, we would not blame him or her for taking, say, half the profits and remaining content for a time to survey the economic trend of the rubber industry at an exalted distance. No one was ever ruined by profit-taking. We do not mean, however, that profits should be taken generally in the rubber market. We advised holding rubber shares in the first place until the autumn, when the declaration of interim dividends at enhanced rates would awaken public interest. This stage has been reached. The forward prices of rubber are for the time firm at 3s. 3d. for Oct.-Dec., and 2s. 6d. for the whole of 1926. Provided there is no material change in the economic outlook for the industry—and there is no sign of any change at the moment—the shares of sound companies may be held for much greater appreciation by the dates next year when the final dividends are declared. But it is all the more important to be cautious, after the rise in prices this year, in making new purchases.

* * *

Having passed some strictures on the original scheme of reconstruction for Austin Motors, it remains to express approval of the new scheme in so far as it leaves the capital of Preference shareholders untouched. We would, however, make it clear that we regard the loss of the General Motors' offer as unfortunate for the Austin shareholders as a whole. We learn that the General Motors has received, since the breakdown of the Austin scheme, five requests from different English firms of good standing in the motor industry for the same terms as were offered to the Austin Motor Company. The real reasons why the General Motors' offer was so vehemently attacked by one section of the Austin Board have not, we believe, been made public.

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